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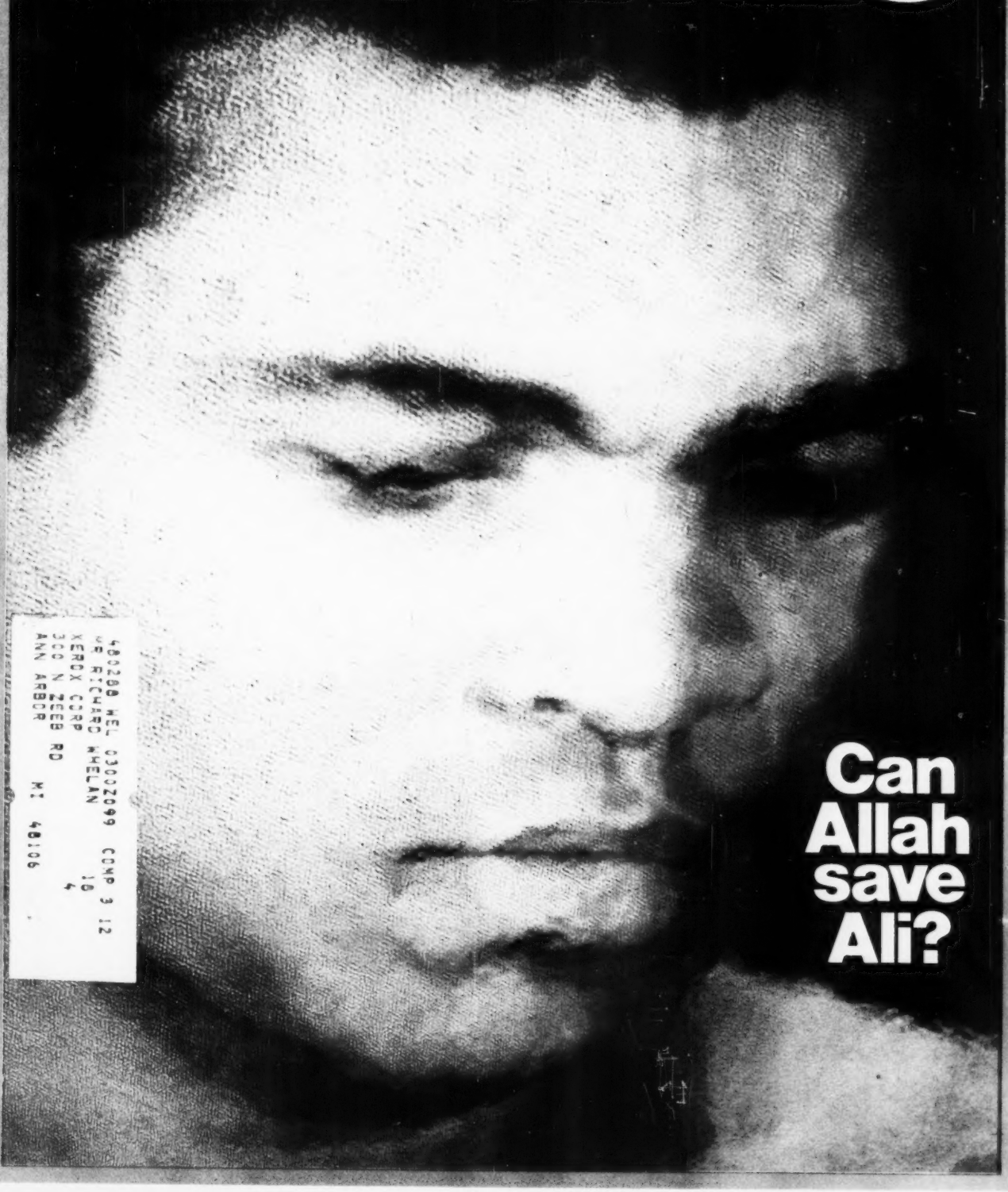

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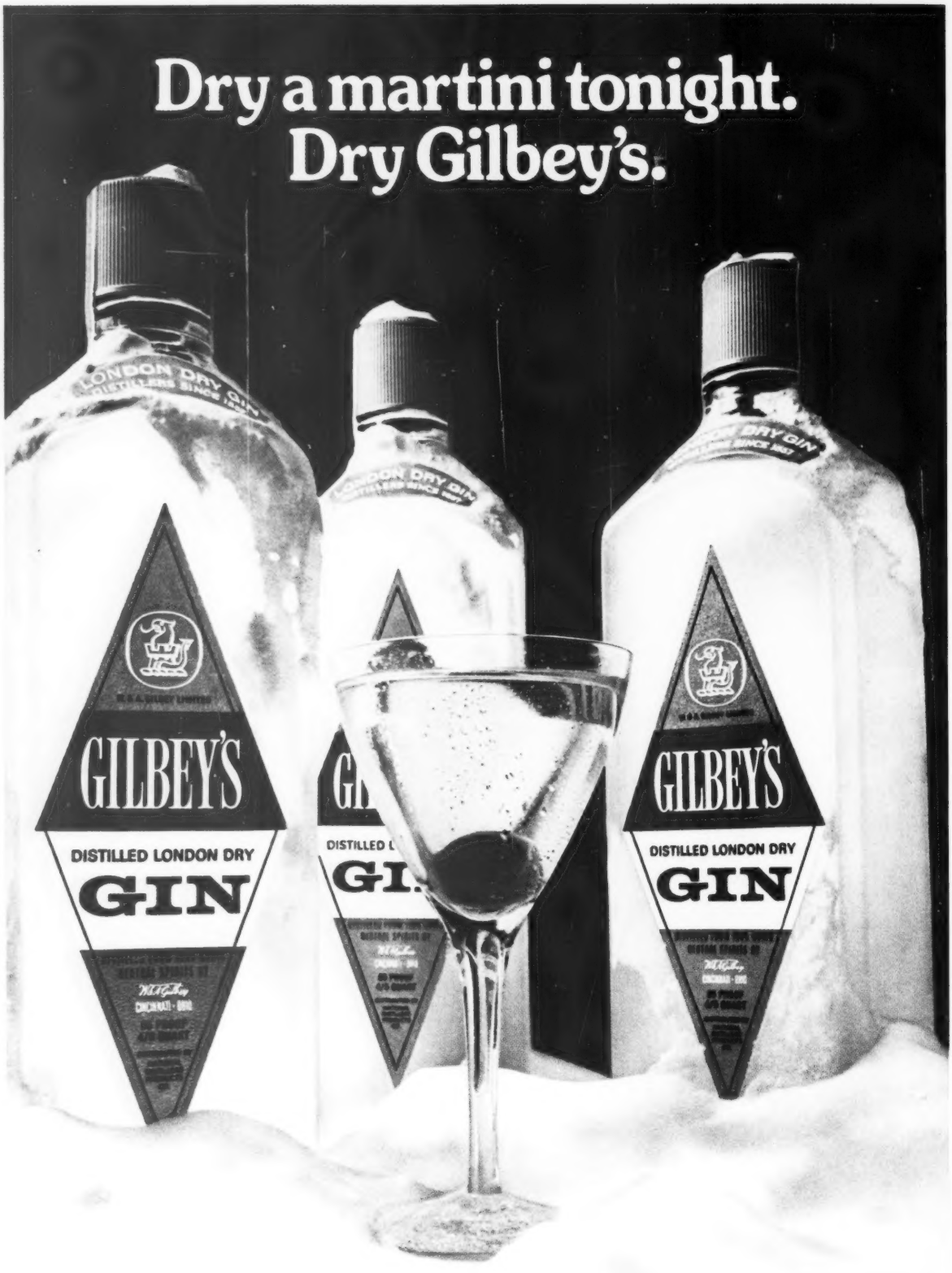

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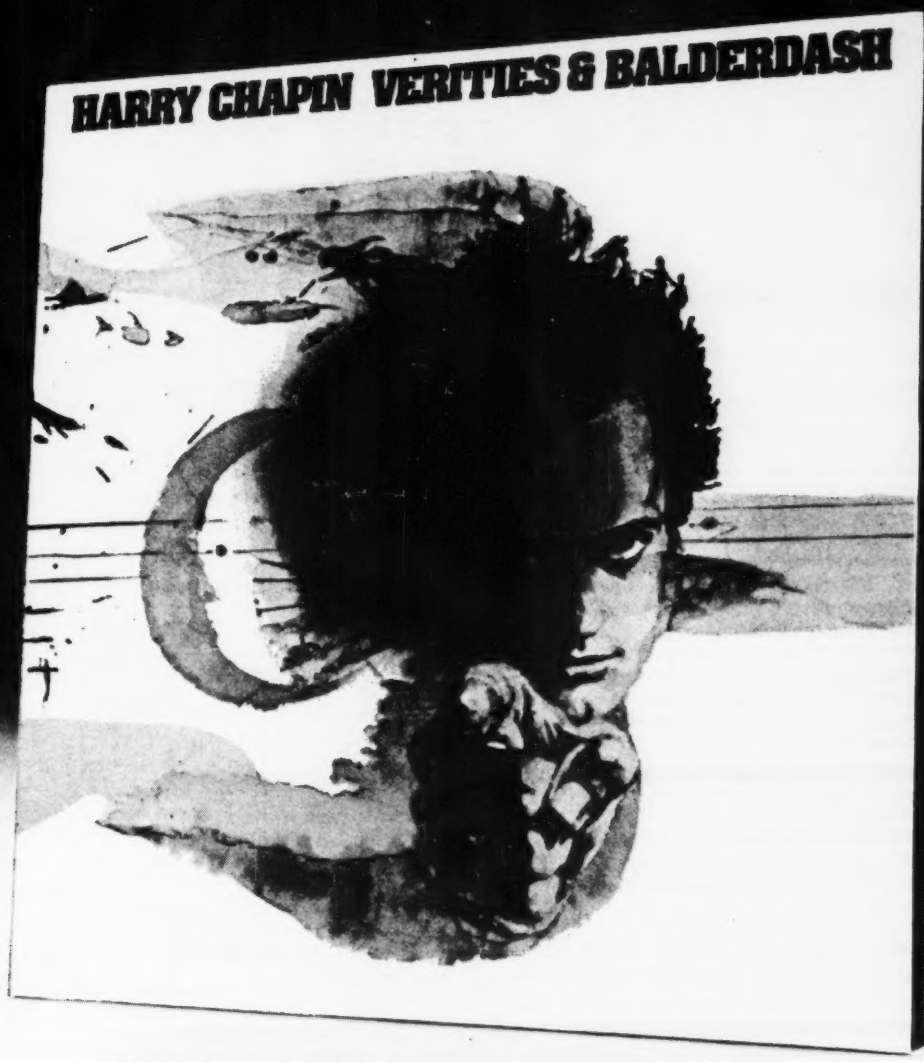

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NEW TIMES, September 6, 1974, Volume 3, Number 5

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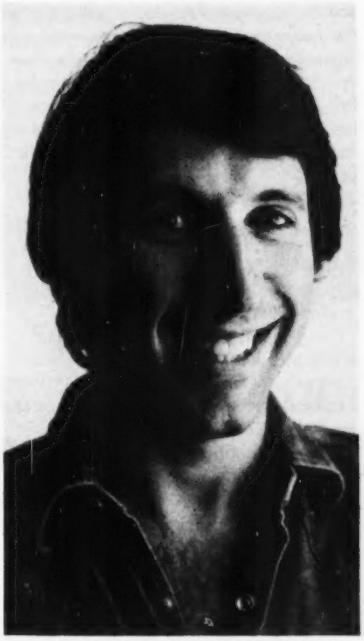
BEHIND THE SCENES

Jesse Kornbluth, the author of this issue's story on Muhammad Ali, is among the most prolific and diversified writers we have been privileged to publish in *NEW TIMES*. In addition to his magazine writing (this is his third piece for us), Jesse writes screenplays, and he is currently at work on a novel, *Swan Lake*, about the ultimate real estate hustle. As a matter of fact, when I asked Jesse to be the subject of this issue's profile, he asked if he might contribute to that as well. Here is Kornbluth on Kornbluth on Ali:



I'd been locked into my apartment for the last four months writing screenplays obsessively (three finished this year, a record of sorts, I'm sure—but probably a negative record since you're supposed to give producers the impression you've sweated blood for years on their scripts), and my only contact with the outside world had been through my sometime collaborator.

I heard that Muhammad Ali was running in the middle of the night to adjust his metabolism to African time, and that seemed like a good way for me to reenter the world—on a moonlight run with the ultimate movie star. And there was the distinct advantage of prose in that idea, too; unlike the script form, you can write whole sentences, type from margin to margin.

From the vantage point of New York myopia, it seemed like a turkey shoot: the Mouth That Roared seen as the Old Man of the Mountain. I started doing wind sprints so I'd be in shape. I didn't want my tape recorder to pick up only the sound of my tubercular panting.

It turned out, of course, that Ali doesn't make furtive midnight creeps, that he's not a Budd Schulberg creature making a valiant comeback. Fortunately, I'd spent about a year researching a book on the Rastafarians, Jamaica's Africa-oriented millennium cult, so it wasn't difficult for me to see Ali as his people see him: Ali the Prophet. His boasting, for example: in ancient Middle Eastern religious cults, that's a reflection of the "satires" that are the basis of the group's oral poetry. At the training camp, I was rereading Gurdjieff's remarkable essay about the "material question"—worrying about money is a writer's main preoccupation and it struck me that Ali and Gurdjieff ran the same game: "Always do," Gurdjieff has said, "that which is useful for others and pleasant for oneself." Gurdjieff, you may remember, was nominally a carpet merchant, but for him every rug sale was a religious—or at least, a metaphorical— act. Not religious in a holy way, but as a reflection of where buyer and seller stood in the universal consciousness game. And Gurdjieff, like Ali, could really make a dollar dance into his pocket.

I thought briefly that I dreamed my Ali experience; I was glad that Peter Simon, our photographer, had the same impression of Ali as at least potential Prophet. Now we're talking about spending more time with him, documenting his life beyond boxing, as he makes the transition from fighter to reformer; if nothing else, Ali will teach me a thing or two about the con as a creative art.

George A. Hirsch

LETTERS

La guerre

Your August 9 issue is superb. The job needed doing, and you did it.

I speak not only as a magazine editor, but as a Marine infantry officer with the 1st Marine Division. I knew what the war was like, but I had never before seen it captured in print. You did it; I thank you.

Bill Broyles
Editor, Texas Monthly
Austin, Texas

Rather surprised to note, despite your apology, the omission of the name of Allard Lowenstein from the Honor Roll. There was no one opposing the Vietnam War earlier than Mr. Lowenstein, and I am sure that Lyndon Johnson never forgot that fact.

I am sure you will receive many letters of this sort, but there could be no one more deserving of mention than the former congressman, now running against John Wydler in Nassau County. I hope you will find a way to correct your error.

Larry Lowenstein
New York, N.Y.

I have just read "How we lost the war and won the peace." I have been waiting a long time to read such an article.

I went to college in 1966. Now I practice my profession in Middle America. Those days have gone. As Dickens once wrote, "They were the best of all possible times, they were the worst of all possible times."

I knew in 1968 why we had to put our backs to the wall. No one else would. No one.

Mark R. Ezra, D.C.
Independence, Missouri

I have read and re-read every article of the Vietnam Scrapbook (August 9). I want to congratulate you all on this issue. To too many of us Vietnam is now a closed issue and long forgotten, when in so many ways it should never and can never be erased. You clearly showed the horrors of this undeclared war which continued so long—too long—at the expense of the American people.

Margot Wegner
Pittsburgh, Pa.

I just had to tell you how much I enjoyed "How we lost the war and won the peace" (Aug. 9). I've read several articles which tried to capture the essence of those four years but none have succeeded the way you did. My four years weren't spent at Harvard—I was at a Midwestern Jesuit university two years later than you—but I couldn't help feeling that I knew your friends and acquaintances, those alternate feelings of euphoria and despair (the world is ending, etc.). You didn't heap guilt on us for abandoning the activist role; you didn't try to rationalize the transition from university student on strike to *New Times* staff member; you didn't indulge in tear-jerking nostalgia. But you did describe beautifully the mood then and now, and, without getting into heavy rhetoric, you explained the change. Thank you.

Liz Allen
Ridgewood, N.J.

Your Vietnam Scrapbook is marvelous! My husband and I had a tug of war over who got to read it first. (He won.)

It is hard to say which feature or article was best (maybe Ridenhour's was) but that's not important. The important thing was that you recognized the importance of the *whole thing.* Too many of us are forgetting the horrors of that war. Your all-encompassing coverage shook us up and scattered the cobwebs.

Freda Goldstein
Philadelphia, Pa.

Here it is the week the House Judiciary Committee Debates the Impeachment of a President for the first time in 100 years. And what do you do? A Vietnam Anniversary issue! Bad show, people. The past is great, but the greatest political story of the century is going on right under your noses and you barely give it a mention.

Other than that, I liked the Vietnam Anniversary Issue. But such ROTTEN TIMING!!!

Jeff Hudson
San Rafael, Calif.

Editor's Note: The Vietnam issue went to press four days before the Judiciary Committee's vote.

Bravo for your excellent and refreshing articles about the atrocities of the Vietnam War (August 9).

However, you blew it! As I read, I was most impressed with your "Vietnam Scrapbook" until it noted "Jane Fonda's baby toilet trained in '72." Ms. Fonda, Tom Hayden (where was his picture?) and Jean-Pierre Debris were here in Madison speaking of the plight of the political prisoner under Thieu's terrorist regime. Her sincerity and positive action aimed toward the Vietnamese people and their problems is more noteworthy than your caption.

Joanne Henderson
Madison, Wisc.

The Gulf of Tonkin Anniversary issue packs quite a wallop, but on the "Honor Roll" I was distressed that pre-1964 failed to list the late William Fitts Ryan, the first voice raised in the U.S. House of Representatives against our Vietnam adventure.

Lee J. Price
Associate Director
National Conference of
Christians & Jews, Inc.
Florida Region

Drugstore lottery

Amanda Spake ("Prescription Payola," July 26) was with the College Press Service for only a year, yet it appears that CPS had a profound effect upon her writing. Ms. Spake still "covers things very superficially."

Her "Prescription Payola" is a classic specimen of "sensational journalism." And most of the information in the article was plagiarized from recent congressional testimony.

Would she really have us believe that physicians are simply the unwitting, or worse yet, the willing stooges of the pharmaceutical industry?

Anyone can create an attention-getting article with a lurid cover, half-truths, one-sided commentary and out-of-context statements.

Since "Prescription Payola" is pretentious journalism and you saw fit to make it a cover story, I choose not to renew my subscription.

Richard F. Kipp
Olympia, Wash.

Amanda Spake's article ("Prescription Payola," July 26) on the drug industry and physicians induced (seduced) into making inappropriate prescriptions is accurate and well researched. As a physician who has opened private practice only three and a half weeks I can certainly say that my own experience coincides with her assertions. I have, in less than a month, received many dollars' worth of samples, a break-down model of the human brain, several boxes of stationery which I must confess, in the last instance, I asked for myself and numerous blandishments to try the drugs of the particular detailman in question.

On the other hand, when I requested from the detailman of Lederle, Inc. some samples of a steroid preparation for an indigent patient whose skin rash was driving him crazy, I received no response whatever.

I sincerely hope that Ms. Spake's article and other efforts like it will bring some change in the policy of the drug companies. I frankly doubt it.

Thomas N. Thomas, M.D.
Phoenix, Ariz.

Flubbed again

Flub: to perform poorly, blunder, bungle!

The above definition comes from the Random House Dictionary. I believe the word was put to a great misuse in your piece about Tom Brokaw (Media, August 23).

You say in your article: "But he flubbed his chance by telling NBC he didn't think reporters should do commercials . . . ."

Is sticking to your principles and not prostituting yourself for money flubbing a chance? If you think so, go out and get a new dictionary, and read it.

Andrew Zum
Flushing, N.Y.

Magnificent obsessions

John Stickney certainly found Pirandello, all right ("Six characters in search of an author," Aug. 23), but he seems oblivious to the Olympian arrogance and condescension implicit in the responses of his interviewed First Readers. Well, he probably has the good taste not to mention it.

While most exhibited a snide concern for the mental health of those unsolicited contributors, First Reader Asekoff reveals himself to be a genuine, gee-whiz diagnostician whose rejection criteria run toward symptoms of ". . . insane versions . . . Obsession. Paranoia. . ."

Here's the improbable psychiatrist-grammarian, Asekoff, in action around oh, say, circa 1920:

On *Joyce:* Erotomanic indications with dysfunctional syntax. Possible penis envy. *Hemingway:* Anal personality with hoarding syndrome evident in sparse style. *Faulkner:* Obsessive-compulsive necrophilia fixation, immobility and impaired punctuation.

Paul Kennedy
New York, N.Y.

Duddiness

Having just read Frank Rich's review of *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* (August 9), I am left not only offended but furious. To say that Duddy Kravitz and the society in which he moves represent an honest picture of the Jewish community, or as Mr. Rich puts it, "Jews alone, unsentimentalized and uncaricatured" is to revert to a disgusting and distorted stereotype of the Jew—one that reeks of anti-Semitism.

Mr. Rich's picture of Jewish culture, which he seems to feel that *Duddy Kravitz* reaffirms (and which seems to come from still other movies, rather than from personal contact with authentic Jewish culture), is an unjustified and cruel one, a caricature in itself.

Adina Klahr
Lawrence, New York

Rich's reply: *I don't know what life is like out in Lawrence, but as a veteran of 10 years of synagogue education (as well as a bar mitzvah) in Washington, D.C., I must reaffirm my belief that* Duddy Kravitz *hits incredibly close to home—and not without affection, either.*

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Why *is* everything at Dunkin' Donuts pink-lavender?

SLOW DOWN

By James S. Kunen

A pal of mine and I were relaxing over a cup of hot coffee at one of our nation's 800 Dunkin' Donut shops when I became uncomfortably aware of the fact that not only the napkin holders and cash register, but also the stools, and the clock's numerals, and the print on the napkins and donut boxes, and parts of the wall were a strange pinky-lavender sort of color, which I didn't like.

"That's to make you finish your coffee and get out," said my friend, who is not given to seeing evil schemes everywhere. He said that all fast food shop interiors are uncomfortable on purpose, to encourage fast turnover; and the exteriors are ugly by design, to catch your eye. He said psychologists show the food people how to do it.

Could this be true? I wondered. WHY *IS* EVERYTHING AT DUNKIN' DONUTS PINK-LAVENDER?

Abraham Goldberg of the Dunkin' Donuts architecture department explained that the pink color I was discomfited by was actually cerise, which was chosen because it was "harmonious with food," but that was in '69; it's being downplayed now anyway. The big thing in interiors now is brick. "We selected the brick because we've gone away from the antiseptic look to a warm-tone, fresh-from-the-oven image."

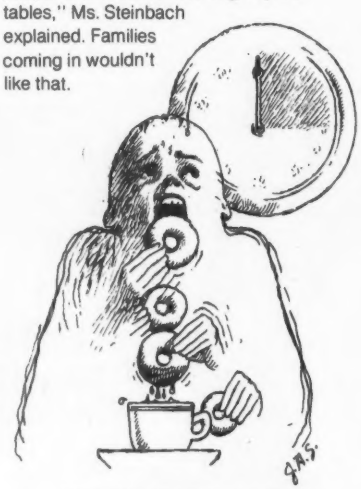
Why? I wanted to know.

"There's some very subtle programming that you introduce to your customer," Mr. Goldberg revealed. "The *program* consists of the *product* and the *consumer*. The first thing you have to know is the *customer profile*. Are your customers children? Adults? Women? Men? The key is to design a mix that averages through the common denominator." Their dough says bricks will do it.

What about encouraging turnover?

Dunkin' Donuts is set up so the customer feels "comfortable for five or ten minutes, and maybe a little crowded," Mr. Goldberg explained. "You can't make it too comfortable; yet you can't make it so uncomfortable that the customer doesn't want to come in."

That's why you won't find a plush booth in any of the burger chains, Carolyn Steinbach told me. She's vice-president of J.B.I., Inc., a California concern which designs the interiors for most McDonald's, Burger King, Burger Chef, Hardee's and Colonel Sanders Kentucky Fried Chicken outlets. Plush upholstery would not encourage and could not endure the turnover which sustains a MacDonald's, where each table undergoes a change of occupants three times every hour. You will find, most often, fiberglass seats, anchored to the floor along with the tables. "Young people would be inclined to group the tables," Ms. Steinbach explained. Families coming in wouldn't like that.



Now, about the exteriors. Do they merely express a crass exuberance, or is the ugliness premeditated?

An architect explained, "Why it's so awful is expressive of our time: the auto and the speed of the auto have created a kind of visual environment that never existed before." When your customers flash by at a mile a minute, the competition for attention is stiff. "A 1,000-watt bulb makes a 500-watt bulb look dull," Dunkin' Donuts' Mr. Goldberg explained succinctly. During what he calls "the post World War II roadside revolution," garishness was everything.

Colonel Sanders' Kentucky Fried Chicken is of that era. Its 4,000 stores—one more opens each day—nearly all sport a red and white striped cupola. I asked one of the Colonel's executives if the design was meant to clash with its environment.

"If you're looking it at it one way, it is," he allowed. But if you look at it his way, it's "projecting an image," which is "our first priority. We want it so that a person can just see the roof, or the bucket, or the Colonel's face, and he can recognize it without having to think about it, or read a sign, or anything—it's just like he's seeing a piece of chicken." Though an attempt is made to tailor some elements of a store's design to its particular environment, "We want the total aesthetic experience the consumer has to be the same everywhere. We try to establish a feeling, which can be tested by market research: a feeling of cleanliness, but without crossing over to sterility; of warmth—a downhome antebellum friendliness."

Kentucky Fried, by holding onto its broad stripes, is bucking a trend.

The combination of environmental controls and a more demanding public has the chains converting from roadside stands to the "restaurant look." And it turns out that whenever a site is upgraded, sales increase. "There's no secrets in the food business," Dunkin's Goldberg points out. So everybody's doing it.

McDonald's, with 2,912 stores and 500 more coming this year, abandoned its enormous golden arches in '68 in favor of brick with "a pagoda-type overhang." A typical new McDonald's seats 125 and takes $200,000 to build, four times what the originals cost. And now they're experimenting with eliminating the brick in favor of "meet-your-community styles": colonial, tudor and stucco.

The new burger buildings aren't even ugly, just incessant. Like those Texaco stations and Firestone stores with their "stone" facades which are actually naugarock, they are reasonable facsimiles of attractive buildings, like something from beside a Lionel track, cute as hell.

We want these numberless identical establishments because we move so much that we need places which are familiar and predictable, and which minimize our contact with strangers.

Uniformity is the word, and the trend is toward more of the same. ●

ILLUSTRATION BY JOSEPH SMITH

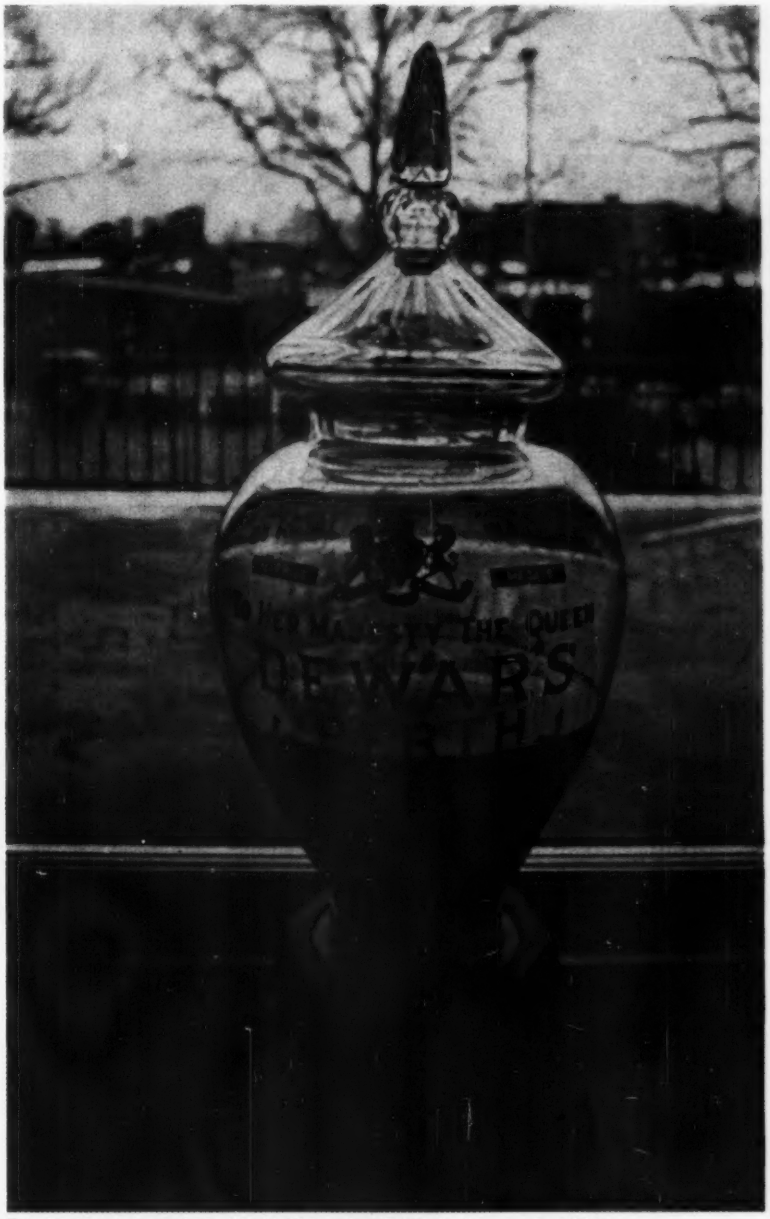
They don't change things much in Perth.

A hundred years ago a guest at the Royal George tavern would sit in this window and watch the ancient river flow by the ancient city. He would also see a large crystal dispenser. It contained a fine Scotch whisky that was famous even then.

The guest today sees nothing very different. And he too enjoys a drop of the same grand whisky dispensed from the same generous container.

They don't change things much in Perth. Especially their whisky. They see no reason to.

DEWAR'S.
"White Label".
Dewar's never varies.



This dispenser is the only one of its kind known to exist. Duplicates are not available.

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CLIPPINGS

New Perils

Voracious African clawed frogs escaped from a medical research laboratory at the University of California, at Davis, and threaten the ecological system of Putah Creek, in Yolo County. The frogs devour fish ravenously.

A species of toad known as bufo marinus was imported to Australia from South America 40 years ago to wipe out the cane beetle destroying the crop in Queensland. The bufos gobbled up the cane beetle and are now eating everything that gets in the way, like those old driver ants you read about or saw in motion pictures years ago. The bufo will eat garbage, ping pong balls, and, lately, it has taken to eating dogs and cats and, some say, cattle.

Postcards were mailed to the nine justices of the Supreme Court with tiny packets containing some substance concealed under each stamp. The United Press International got word from an outfit calling itself Aliens of America that the packets contained nerve gas. The FBI said this was not so but would not say what was in the packages.

Scientists have in recent times found ways of making "live" molecules from genetic material (DNA) which never existed in nature. These are useful for learning how genes work. Now, a committee of scientists, led by Dr. Paul Berg, of Stanford University, wants the National Academy of Sciences to declare a moratorium on creating these living hybrids. If any of these molecules get loose, they might cause cancer or combine to form new bacteria which could be resistant to antibiotics.

A venereal disease, probably dourine, has infected the wild burros near China Lake, California. It is strictly an equine disease, an expert said.

The Brazilian honeybees were a shiftless bunch, so to jazz them up a bit, give them that old get-up-and-go bees need to really put out the honey, a Brazilian scientist brought in an African bee to cross with the gentler ones. The African bee is aggressive, hard-working and a good producer. And mean as homemade sin. Something went wrong. In a few years after the breeding, roaring masses of bees attacked and killed dogs, horses and people. The Brazilian bee was no longer a lovable Latin. These bees are moving north at the rate of 200 miles a year.

ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN WELKIS

A gas used as a refrigerant and aerosol propellant is being pumped into the atmosphere by the millions of tons, scientists from the University of California, at Irvine, reported. Molecules of the gas are nearly inert and stay around for years. They rise to the upper atmosphere and destroy ozone. The destruction of the ozone layer in the upper atmosphere could endanger the existence of life on earth.—from the Los Angeles *Times*, the New York *Daily News*, the Charlotte *Observer* and the Atlanta *Constitution*

While you're up . . .

Two old Cary Grant movies, *Bringing Up Baby* and *The Philadelphia Story*, were shown at Grant's Tomb, which faces the Hudson River in New York City.—from the New York *Times*

Give Me That Old-time Religion

Jeannie C. Riley, who was singing in an amusement park in Agawam, Mass., said her hit song of six years ago, "Harper Valley P.T.A.," was a monster. She said she realized God did not want her to record any more songs such as "P.T.A." It satirized small-town hypocrisy. "I know God has a mission for me," she said.—from the Kansas City *Star*

The Word

Dr. Don R. Boyd, of the United Methodist Church, of Los Angeles, says God is neither a Father nor Mother. "What we really need," he said, "are some new words in our language to describe Him."—from the Los Angeles *Times*

Tortoise Story

To protect desert tortoises from humans, the Desert Empire District of the California Garden Club will spend $40,000 to erect a 22-mile-long, six-foot-high fence in Fremont Valley, which is northeast of the Mojave.—from the Los Angeles *Times*

The world on $175,000 a day;
The Democrats take a dive;
Ms. in the defense of motherhood

THE INSIDER

POWER POLITICS

Disclosing the Rockefeller fortune

Among the Rockefeller haters—and there's a long list including not only Democrats but some bitter Republican politicians who have felt Rocky's wrath—his nomination as Vice President comes as both a disappointment and an opportunity. While there seems to be little doubt Rockefeller will eventually be confirmed, the hearings are likely to bring out the first complete disclosure of where his income comes from and where he invests it. The hope among Rocky's enemies is that the hearings will provide good leads and the Watergate-conditioned press will follow up with investigations.

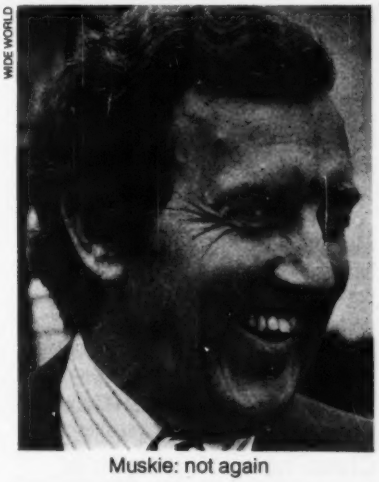
Associates close to Rockefeller, though a little worried about what might turn up, believe that he has always put his money into such professional hands that the accounting will prove thorough. But even so, there is some concern as to how the public will handle the mind-boggling size of his wealth. Said one Republican politician, "There is one theory that has Rockefeller earning $175,000 a day and it's going to be a little unreal for people to accept that."

The GOP: up from disaster

The coming of Gerald Ford has totally altered the political equations for 1974. Although the political experts have had little time to assess the full impact, the early betting is that the GOP will now avoid a Nixon-spawned debacle this November. Two weeks ago, vote-counters in both parties were predicting anywhere from 100 to 150 new House members this fall. That figure has now been lowered to under 100. Most of the losses will still be among Republicans, but they will not lose the 40 to 75 seats often predicted. In the Senate, GOP senators like Peter Dominick of Colorado and Bob Dole of Kansas are breathing much easier. Both still face tough fights but, as a Dole aide put it, "We won't be running with our legs tied together."

WIDE WORLD

The Kissinger-Rockefeller connection: like old times



WIDE WORLD

Muskie: not again

And the Democrats, who only weeks ago were gloating over their rosy future this fall and in 1976, now see the political future depressingly dismal. Ford and Rockefeller are going to be a formidable ticket come '76 and the Democrats have got surprisingly few long ball hitters to go up against them. Teddy Kennedy is shackled with Chappaquiddick, Henry Jackson is anathema to the liberals and George Wallace, well, George Wallace is still George Wallace. There is some talk about Ohio Gov. John Gilligan, Florida Gov. Ruben Askew, Sen. Mondale from Montana and even Edmund Muskie. That's how bad it is.

Can Rocky play second fiddle?

In the new makeup of the Ford presidency, a key relationship to watch

will of course be that between Rockefeller and Kissinger. Kissinger entered politics as Rocky's adviser on foreign relations and, no doubt, Rockefeller's recommendation carried a lot of weight when Nixon appointed Kissinger.

The feeling is that Kissinger and Rockefeller will work the international beat, leaving Ford to concentrate on domestic matters. But Rocky will probably move into one key domestic area as well—labor relations. In his long tenure as New York governor, Rockefeller made a point of getting close to the labor movement and he is expected to continue developing his rapport.

Unlike his predecessors, Rockefeller is going to cut out an impressive role for himself as Vice President—which might grate on Ford's men, if not Ford himself. Rocky is obviously a more dynamic man than Ford, and, because of his connection with Kissinger and his international financial power, will attract considerable personal attention—particularly from visiting foreign dignitaries. This could pose a problem for Ford. As one Rockefeller insider put it, "Rocky's just not used to playing second fiddle."

Cleaning out the Cabinet

Key aides to President Ford have been busily leaking the word that a majority of the Cabinet can be expected to be replaced by the first of next year. Although their boss indicated that Ford has been happy with the Cabinet during his first weeks in office, Ford staffers maintain that he wants his own people in key positions. Only Henry Kissinger seems assured of keeping his post. Cabinet members most often mentioned as being up for replacement are Attorney General William Saxbe and Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Casper Weinberger. Ford

WIDE WORLD

Saxbe: out before Jan. 1?

WIDE WORLD

Green: Ford's woman in the Cabinet?

aides are already floating the name of Elliott Richardson as attorney general, although, one admitted, "I'm not sure he'd take it." Being mentioned as a possible replacement for Weinberger, who wants to return to private life anyway, are former Pennsylvania Governor William Scranton, now on Ford's "transition team," and retiring Oregon Congresswoman Edith Green, a Democrat. A Green nomination would solve a number of problems since Ford has told several advisers that he feels committed to naming at least one woman and one Democrat to the Cabinet.

Next wars on the agenda

Vietnam, the Mideast, Northern Ireland and now Cyprus seem to have a corner on the war market these days, dominating headlines and basically getting all the attention. But there are several other places where new wars are getting ready to break out and undoubtedly will be ignored until the bullets and bombs start to explode.

Almost unnoted by the American press has been the rapidly escalating war of words between Peru and Chile. A hundred years ago, Chile grabbed off a good chunk of Peru and Peru has been anxious to retrieve it ever since. Troops from both countries are now massed along the borders with some incidents reported. Recent CIA reports predict full-scale fighting within the next two months. Peru would definitely have the upper hand in a full war.

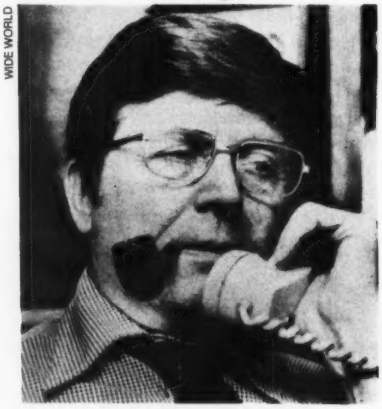
Another unnoted potential hotspot is the small Communist country of Yugoslavia. Marshall Tito cannot live forever and Defense experts fear his death may lead to conflict between pro-Soviet factions and Yugoslavian leaders closer to the West. "The potential for another Czechoslovakia is here," contends one Defense officer. Since the United States does not want a longtime ally to come under Soviet domination, American involvement is a definite possibility.

Trouble has been brewing between pro-American Iran and pro-Soviet Iraq for some time. At issue is which country will dominate the eastern part of the Mideast, with both nations rich and strong enough to lay claim. Both Iran and Iraq have excellent armies supplied by the major powers. A Pentagon war expert says, almost longingly, "An Iraq-Iran war would be a good one, but it could draw both us and the Soviets into it."

MEDIA

terHorst's star

White House press secretary Jerry terHorst is said to have turned down a real plumb to be with President Ford. Sources at the Washington *Star-News*



WIDE WORLD

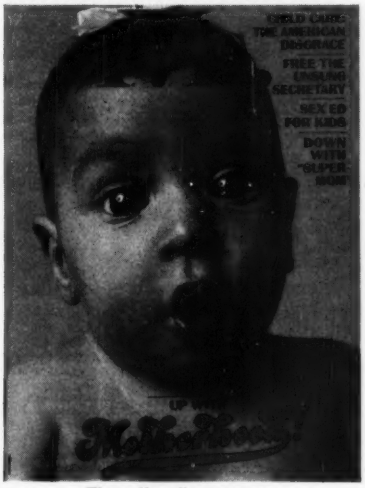
terHorst: one plumb for another

say that terHorst had been approached by new *Star* boss Joe Allbritton to take over as editor or national editor of the paper. terHorst was seriously considering the offer when the call from the White House came.

Ms. pitches motherhood

At least that was the accusation leveled at *Ms.* magazine during a recent conference, "Pronatalism: Threat to Personhood and Planet," sponsored by the National

Organization for Non-Parents, the New York chapter of NOW and other organizations. *Ms.*, charged communications expert Dr. Helen Franzwa, was guilty of "extolling the virtues of motherhood." She recalled that the May 1973 issue featured an appealing baby on the cover with a blurb reading "UP WITH MOTHERHOOD" and an article in which Letty Progrebin ecstatically described the joys of raising children. Especially disturbing to Dr. Franzwa was a *Ms.* "Story for Free Children," in which a little girl is told, "Women are different from men. And one of the



The offending cover

things women have to do is have babies. God made them that way." Feminists Lois Gould, Claudia Dreifus and Ellen Peck were among others to openly question "momism" in feminism—that is, the assumption that all liberated women will have children as well as a career.

Mary Tom at *Ms.* conceded that the accusation had "some validity. It's something we should think about." The magazine's position is that women should have all options, including whether or not to have a baby, yet "we are in a defensive position on the issue of motherhood because everyone expects the women's movement to be anti-children." Ms. Tom said that the conference has caused *Ms.* staffers to reevaluate their attitude toward motherhood in the magazine because "we should be ourselves and not have to excuse ourselves."

De-pinking the *L.A. Free Press*

The massage parlor ads still form the financial backbone of the *Los Angeles Free Press*, but, characteristic of the paper's new management, bras and panties have now been pasted on the models. A similar sense of discretion has also tempered the paper's editorial content since Don Partrick and Troy Boal, the two San Diego businessmen who bought control of the publication in 1971, decided to transform the underground weekly into "an alternative liberal news medium." Thus no one was surprised when Arthur Kunkin, old-time socialist and the paper's founder, had to crash a recent party celebrating the *Free Press'* tenth anniversary.

With a circulation over 100,000 and a mini-empire that included three free-wheeling book stores, the *Freep* (a nickname rarely heard these days) reached its peak in 1969, when Kunkin decided to print a stolen list of state narcotics agents. The state immediately sued. Kunkin protested that he didn't know the list was stolen. Although the courts eventually found him innocent, Kunkin lost control of the paper during the resultant furor.

Partrick and Boal fired Kunkin as editor last fall. "We had the opinion that the paper was, if not ultraliberal, then a little bit socialistic, communistic—perhaps you could say there was a little red tinge to it," Partrick said. Under the editorship of Chris Van Ness, the paper took on a more apolitical sheen. Although it has poked around at the edges of the SLA, and although it runs such liberal columnists as Nicholas von Hoffman and Jack Anderson, the bulk of the paper has been given over to respectful Hollywood profiles. But Partrick, a Republican, and Troy, an Independent, still weren't satisfied. Four weeks after the paper's anniversary celebration, they also fired Van Ness.

Hollywood ponders the gay flick

While Newman and Redford, Hoffman and McQueen ride off into the sunset together, buddy-buddy movies, rife with hints of latent homosexuality, have become the commanding box-office blockbusters. Nonetheless, Hollywood has generally steered clear of any more blatant treatment of gay subjects, a fear that might finally be confronted if Patricia Nell Warren's *The Frontrunner* finds its way onto the screen. Militantly pro-gay, the novel tells of two definitely macho men, a middle-aged track coach and his star runner, who fall in love on their way to the '76 Olympics. Veteran Hollywood agent Hugh French has purchased the movie rights to the book, and Paul Newman, among others, is interested in the project.

The trials of *The Trial of Billy Jack*

Although Tom Laughlin has yet to bring himself to cut the final version of *The Trial of Billy Jack*, the sequel to his enormously successful *Billy Jack*, he has already begun previewing the film for exhibitors and preview audiences. Typically, the North Hollywood audience)predominantly young and working-class) that saw the 2½ hour rough cut were ecstatic in their reactions, cheering every time Laughlin as Billy removes his boots for a bout of karate, applauding the anti-Nixon references derisively and crying in anguish as everyone from Vietnamese children to students to Indians are gunned down by GIs and national guardsmen.

His arm raised in a fist, Laughlin looked every inch the character he plays (although he apologized for having put on 30 pounds) as he took the stage after the preview screening. Will there be yet another sequel? asked one unsatiated fan. "As long as there's still madness running this country, as long as people are rummaging in garbage cans for food, you're goddamned right we'll make another one," he vowed. Disturbed by the violence in the film, one patron stormed out of the theater. "I hope you distributors enjoy this film," he shouted. "I hope you make a pile of money."

Laughlin: too much madness

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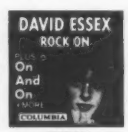

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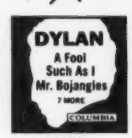

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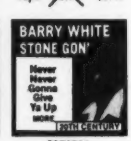

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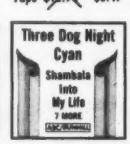

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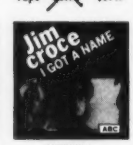

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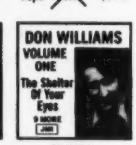

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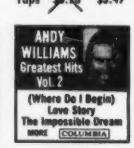

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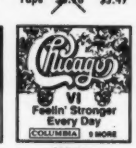

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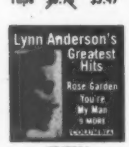

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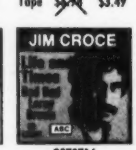

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RTU-42

The Long Goodbye

By Larry L. King

I first saw him in 1952; he stood on a flatbed truck at the Odessa-Midland airport, in the windy desert reaches of Texas. Barnstorming, he gave the Democrats hell in the name of Eisenhower's Great Crusade. Though I was a young local radio reporter and took his speech down on tape—yes!—I now recall not a word. I remember a dark man in a dark suit, occasionally jerking his arms and raising his voice, exhorting the faithful. They cheered him to the tall skies in that conservative oil country, for Ike and Dick had pledged to reserve the mineral rights to the offshore Tidelands for the individual states: for the little schoolchildren of those states, so the official rhetoric ran.

Pat I recall more clearly than Dick. She sat on one of the countless platforms constituting her past and her future, not objecting when photographers asked her again and again to pose wearing an oil field hard hat. Thelma Ryan Nixon was not a bad looking woman then, red of hair, a bit lean and angular and maybe hard-boned.

Three of us in the small press corps were invited by some nameless poohbah on Senator Nixon's campaign plane to fly to the next stop, El Paso; the bait was a promise of personal interviews with the young Vice Presidential candidate. For reasons unremembered, I did not go. Jim Scott and Brad Carlisle did. The next morning they telephoned their newspaper for return air fare and, on arrival, appeared hungover and sheepish: they brought back no story because Senator Nixon, not wishing to be quizzed, had stored himself away in his private compartment after brief handshakes. For three or four years, my friends Scott and Carlisle were repeatedly—if vainly—billed by the Republican National Committee for their fruitless flight. They were originally amused and ultimately outraged. Twenty years later, as President Nixon mired himself deeper and deeper in Watergate, one of them would say in response to my midnight call, "You know, after that El Paso fiasco I always knew the bastard couldn't amount to much."

Everyone has at least one Nixon story to tell. When the Death Watch finally came, one longtime Tricky Dick watcher roamed the capital, remembering the old tales and catching up on the new

I guess everyone in my generation, that one spraddling World War II and Korea, has at least one Dick Nixon story and a million memories of the man. Perhaps I have a few more than the average, because I came to Washington in 1954 to work as a Capitol Hill aide. One then saw the Vice President occasionally wandering the halls where he kept an office and, infrequently, presided over the U.S. Senate. My contacts with him were random, perfunctory, and I in no way knew the man. Yet he was a presence in my life and in my generation; there seemed no end to his kitchen debates, public stonings, partisan speeches.

I remember meeting him in a Capitol corridor one slow Saturday morning when few folks were around the Hill—in those lazy days, Congress met for only half the year and rarely worked on Saturday. We had ample time to size each other up as we approached, as two gunslingers might; just as I started to feel self-conscious, I realized from his pasted smile and darting eyes—hell, from some sort of Uriah Heep general bearing, I think—that my Vice President was the more ill at ease. He darted into an office I was visiting one day, asked to use the telephone and somehow damn near tripped by tangling himself in the cord. Departing, he seemed to fumble for an exit line; his thanks seemed excessively profuse and hearty and his eyes didn't focus.

Capitol Hill jokes of the period summed up general impressions. A favorite, shortly after Ike's heart attack, had Nixon and the President standing in front of the endless steep steps leading up to the East Front of the Capitol Building and Nixon saying, "Race you to the top, Mr. President?"

In 1960, during the Kennedy-Nixon campaign, I was with the late Speaker Sam Rayburn in an El Paso hotel room when the old man said to a group of us, "You know, one time I confided to somebody that out of the thousands of men and women I had served with in the House, Dick Nixon had the most hateful

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER SIMON

Contributing Editor King reported on "LBJ through Watergate-colored glasses" in the last issue of NEW TIMES.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER SIMON

face. Well, it got in the newspapers and it embarrassed me. But it was true. And now, boys, why, they've taken that son of a bitch and they're trying to make him President of the United States!"

That was always the trouble with Dick Nixon. Folks just didn't cotton to him. They called him names, found him hateful, awkward, a bit Sammy Glickey. He was the class Fat Boy, somehow, without being fat. Even now, it's difficult to say exactly why. I think it had more mysterious roots than the ritual liberal litany—the "pinko" campaigns against Jerry Voorhis and Helen Gahagan Douglas, the tasteless Checkers speech, the hot rhetoric convincing Sam Rayburn, Dean Acheson, Adlai Stevenson and Harry Truman that he had called them traitors. "No class," Jack Kennedy flatly said, watching a Nixon TV performance. That was part of it, but somehow not all.

When Nixon loyalists charge that America has long harbored a hard corps of Nixon haters, I'd have to judge them right. I've hated the man a good 20 years; he is the only politician who has truly scared me, made me fear him for reasons I truly didn't know until Watergate stripped his soul naked. There are other politicians I have intensely disliked, but in some cases I broke bread or drank whiskey with them; as everyone observed the social amenities, we got through with minimum ordeals and I was surprised to learn that I actually *liked* craggy old easy-cussin' Barry Goldwater. One fuzzy night at a Georgetown party, I confessed to Senator Goldwater that I owed an apology for long having thought him an ogre. I don't think that would have happened had I been socially paired with Dick Nixon.

In the mid-1960s, when Nixon apparently had no more comeback opportunities than did Benito Mussolini or Judge Crater, I turned down a piece on Nixon-in-eclipse. I just didn't want to spend two minutes with the damned fellow: wasn't even curious about him.

That lack of curiosity—perhaps predicated on the promise that we knew Dick Nixon, that no mysteries remained in him after we'd observed him on the stage for 20 years—was a fatal American concept. We tried to believe it when they told us of The New Nixon: that he had mellowed, that time and maturity had refurbished him. That was the accepted wisdom, the myth, the folklore. When you got to be President, see, you just sort of sprouted wings and turned a bit golden. You might make mistakes, might fumble now and then, but somehow there was this certain Presidential purifying process that turned one's old saline or brackish waters into soothing cool mists sure to help the Republic toward fuller flower. We had been glad to see several Presidents go, among them Lyndon Johnson and Harry Truman, but by the time of Nixon's reign the revisionist view was that the little four-eyed man from Missouri may have grown an additional foot-and-a-half in the White House. Any reason not to believe, then, that even Dick Nixon might stand taller once exposed to the magic?

Then he proved to be a moral midget; his "growth," it developed, was no more than his fooling us by wearing elevated shoes. What Dick Nixon sadly may never understand is how much guilt and rage he made us feel; somebody else has said that he embarrassed us because you don't like seeing an old dog you've kicked around. But I think it's more. I think it was this: here we'd finally bought his damned old used car—had convinced ourselves that it beat walking, might get us down the freeway with fewer flats than we'd expected, perhaps even grow new pistons or unaccountably take on additional speeds—and right there in midpassage, with the whole world watching, it blew gaskets and leaked oil and stalled itself. Why, the man had sold us a goddamn *lemon!* Shock absorbers gone after 5,000 miles! Bad brakes! We had done business with Tricky-Dick-the-Edsel-King: yessir, yessir, low down payment, easy financing, a free gallon of gas with every purchase, open 24 hours, step right up folks. . . .

"You read of the big events in the history books and figure the earth trembled when they happened. A President is falling . . . and I sit here eating crab cakes"

After the House Judiciary Committee voted three articles of impeachment, I returned to old Capitol Hill haunts to sample the Washington mood. There was uncertainty there, as in the rest of the country, and rumors galore—the Nixon Gang had gathered at Camp David over the weekend and now, on this Monday, August 5th, everybody waited for another shoe to drop. "I had breakfast with Barry Goldwater," said Congressman Morris Udall, Arizona Democrat, "and he says if there's one more loud firecracker—it won't even take a bombshell—it's all over." The bombshell by then was semi-expected: John Rhodes, House Minority Leader, had canceled the press conference at which he was supposed to announce his impeachment views; Washington had heard too much, in the past two years, to fully trust his excuse of a sore throat.

In the Capitol Hill Democratic Club, over drinks, Mark Russell was morose. Russell is a lean, scholarly-looking nightclub comedian who for almost 20 years has titillated Washington audiences with his topical political commentary. "It's gonna be damn difficult to make fun of him," Russell fretted, "now that he's about to be impeached. Some things, you know, people just don't want you joking about."

Through the afternoon, people wandered in and out—Democratic congressmen, their aides or secretaries, lobbyists, journalists—picking each other's brains, speculating, wondering. Suddenly there was a commotion: a television bulletin had just revealed the transcript that broke the President's back, the one proving he had ordered a Watergate cover-up as early as six days after the break-in. The partisans scoffed, hooted, laughed; "Goodbye, Dick," someone sang. There seemed precious little of compassion; one had the notion everyone was beyond surprise or additional outrage. Then I walked a couple of blocks to The Capitol Hill Club—the GOP counterpart to the Democratic Club—to be firmly advised that only members and their invited guests might be admitted. From the foyer, one heard no laughter. Within hours, even the last of the 10 Nixon defenders on the Judiciary Committee had recanted.

That night, pacing backstage before he would go on in a cocktail lounge at the Shoreham Hotel, Mark Russell debated whether this might be the night when his Nixon jokes fell with a deadly thud into a terribly silent void. "Art Buchwald was right," he said. "You just can't satirize in this damn town anymore. The fantasy can't keep up with the reality."

Facing his audience, he said, "Well, folks, will there be an Impeachment Ball— or just a Gala and Parade?" The crowd laughed and applauded. Russell offered a hint of a grin and seemed to relax: "Don't blame *me*. I voted for Helen Gahagan Douglas." Whoops and laughter. "You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool Judge Sirica." Cheers. Russell looks mischievous: "When the President's lawyers come before the bench now, Judge Sirica holds up a hand and says, 'Don't tell me—let me guess.' " On target. Now Russell displays a thick copy of the Nixon tran-

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scripts: "I paid twelve bucks for this at the Government Printing Office. Of course, it's a tax write-off—a little trick I picked up from you-know-who." Laughter. "Once I had to find my own comic situations. Now, it's just rip and read." Bedlam. Then he read from the transcripts at length—straight, near-deadpan, with only an occasional aside—while the audience howled merrily and merrily clapped backs.

Sipping beer backstage between shows, Russell was in high spirits. But what are you gonna do—someone asked—when the roof falls in? That man is *gone.* . . .

The comedian sighed and looked gloomy. "Well, thank God, I go on vacation next week. Maybe when I come back the signs will be easier to read."

BLACK STAR

For the last time, Julie comforts—and is comforted by—the President.

About noon on Tuesday, August 6th, a small fire brought clanging red trucks to the vicinity of the Capitol Hill GOP Club, inspiring much gallows humor. A wag looked at the sky and said, "Aw, *come on,* God!" Word circulated that the blaze had been caused "by a stack of tapes that spontaneously ignited."

On the Senate side, with impeachment in the House now "a foregone conclusion" by the President's own account, there was a dead certainty of Nixon's conviction. It was matter-of-fact, with little excitement evident. At a small luncheon of Senate aides, Lee Williams, of Senator William Fulbright's office, said, "You know, you read of big events in the history books and figure the earth trembled when they happened. A President is falling, something that's never happened before, and I sit here eating crab cakes. All I feel is tired and impatient to get it over with."

In those Capitol Hill bars and bistros where congressmen and senators relax themselves—the Rotunda, Club 116, the Monocle—one heard an astonishingly small amount of talk of the Nixon Crisis. The conversation was of the NFL football strike, of sex, of this legislative proposal or that mundane something else. Like Lee Williams, everyone seemed to be eating crab cakes while history brewed a dark storm.

"We've just talked it to death for *so* long," a tipsy congressional Democrat from Michigan said. "We're sick of it. Maybe, I don't know, we sense it's coming to a boil and we want a night off before it boils over. Seems like more people are drinking more whiskey tonight. And I'll buy *you* a goddamn drink if you won't mention the fucking matter again."

By Wednesday, August 7th, the first crowds began to appear around White House fences—silent sentinels, sensing, somehow, there might soon be a changing of the guard. Throughout the day rumors were floated and shot down only to be launched anew. He's quitting; he's not; he loves us; he loves us not.

But even in the quickening excitement, Capitol Hill droned on. A minor functionary of the House Agriculture Committee, en route to the House and Senate press galleries with press releases announcing the passage of a bill to provide that Smokey Bear upon his death be returned for burial to his native Capitan, New Mexico, wryly noted that such important news probably would wind up in the back pages over near the truss ads. "It was really funny in Committee," he said. "Here the government appears to be falling, and all these congressmen were squabbling over the language to be employed in the Smokey Bear resolution."

"I don't want him to resign," a Midwestern congressman said at noon. "For one thing, it's too easy. People may figure we've forced him out in a political coup, and it's not that at all. For another thing, dammit, the House has been sucking the hind tit for 20 years. People think of us as buffoons. And now, just as we've gained prestige thanks to the Judiciary Committee, it's blowing up in our faces. If he quits, we won't get our day in the sun. I want him impeached." Few of the congressman's luncheon companions agreed: no, hell no, the strain was too much. Let him quit and be gone. Give him immunity, a pension, an all-day sucker, anything he wanted. Just get the bastard packed and on the road.

Not much work was getting done on Capitol Hill. Aides and secretaries stayed by their office television sets or radios or wandered the halls exchanging new signs and portents: the Nixon girls and their husbands were in the White House; Ed Cox and David Eisenhower were bidding goodbye to Nixon staffers; a delegation of Republican leaders soon would be summoned. Reports came from the Senate side that Barry Goldwater was on the warpath, scowling and cursing and trembling in rage; he had accused reporters of having told "goddamn lies" in reporting he'd been unable to gain a White House audience and in quoting him as saying resignation was imminent. "That's not like Barry," an old Hill hand said. "Usually he's courteous to a fault and today he's acting a real terror. I think it's over and he knows it but he can't say so yet."

I woke in the night with chills and fevers: aching, sneezing, coughing, snorting—an old-fashioned case of the flu. By Thursday morning it was obvious I was fit to continue the Nixon Watch only by television, as would most of my countrymen. I established a bed on a favorite old brown couch, surrounding it with Kleenex, aspirin, throat lozenges, vitamin compounds and oceans of orange juice. There was more than frustration in being confined, shaking and sweating, as the end

approached. There seemed almost a comic dishonor in it, as if one had ridden all the way to Balaclava and then had said to fellow members of the Light Brigade, "Ah, you other 599 cats gonna have to charge through the valley without me; I got this bad hangnail. . . ."

The fever ran uphill and down, soaking multiple pairs of pajamas; one was alternately hot or clammy and fitfully dozed between TV bulletins: crowds were increasing around the White House gates, government limousines came and went, the President would address the nation from the Oval Office that night. My hot dreams were fragmented, disjointed, reflecting much of the chaos of American life in recent years: in my subconscious John F. Kennedy rose from his tomb in Arlington Cemetery, but appeared only as a skeleton; there was a running gun battle in a Capitol corridor, between forces I couldn't identify: everyone popped from behind pillars or statues to shoot willy-nilly at everyone else, so that it was impossible to make sense of it or find any pattern, and often someone who got hit laughed and laughed; I was walking with Dick Nixon along a seashore, while Pat and the daughters waited for us in an old car on a small brown dune, and *I told him what a good job he'd done.* Jesus, let the Freudians have a field day with that one.

Friends began telephoning invitations to resignation parties, and after awhile I unplugged the telephone. Later, liquor stores in the Capitol Hill area would report having sold 15 to 20 times the normal amounts of champagne that afternoon and evening. Crowds multiplied at the White House fences and across the street in Lafayette Park, becoming rowdy and caustic where earlier they had been tense and watchful. My fever rose to 102 degrees, and though I felt perfectly wretched, the nagging thought persisted that my illness was somehow psychosomatic. Or maybe, I fancied, it was symbolic: the body politic of America was down with chills and fevers, was purging itself of some lingering old disease; somehow I had become its embodiment. (Later I would read that John Kenneth Galbraith had said, "There will now be a drawing of morals until healthy stomachs retch. Someone, I promise you, will say that the fault lies deeply within ourselves. Well, the hell it does. It lies with Richard Nixon and the people who voted him into office.") Later, too, an old friend—a former network television man who had covered Nixon for years and who despised him—would describe his reaction shortly after hearing the President would resign that night: "I felt pains in my arms and chest, dizziness, nausea, all the classic signs of a heart attack. I'm certain now that it was psychosomatic—related to the day's events, though I don't know what it means. But it was very real."

Waiting for the President to sing his swan song, I wondered again whether he might be crazy. Actually demented. There seemed such dark senseless fears in the man—"Nobody is a friend of ours, remember that," he had snapped shortly after the American people had given him the largest landslide victory in our history—and such a propensity to punish his enemies, to see them in Hell if he could, that even the gentlest judgment assumed a deep paranoia. Had not the Watergate yarn come unraveled, would Nixon have remained content to jail his enemies for tax violations or might there have come a day when he reached toward that little red button on the big black box? Dwell on that one when you're registering a high fever, stoned on Panama Red, and float surrealistically in and out of consciousness.

GAMMA

Outside the White House fortress, the crowds gathered for the long vigil.

My companion, Kathy, speculated on whether the President might throw himself on the mercy of the court: make certain damaging new admissions, cop a plea in hopes of immunity from prosecution. I thought that more wishful thinking than not. No, the Dick Nixon I thought I knew would put the best possible face on things if we were lucky—make us a final campaign speech—or, if we were not, he would go down growling defiance, claiming martyrdom, tearing the national fabric even more. Anything else would make this final humiliation too awful for him: here was a proud man whose humiliations long had predated Watergate. Even his old idol Ike had made it clear he didn't think Nixon was prime Presidential material, had publicly invited him to "chart your own course" in 1956—causing Nixon to have to humble himself by saying he'd like to be Vice President again, please. And, when asked at a press conference in 1960 whether his Veep had contributed a single major idea or program to the Administration, he had said, "Well, if I had a week I might think of one." Yes, he had been defeated and rejected almost from the moment we took notice of him; it somehow remained a miracle he had managed to get up, keep coming back, taking the jabs and the slaps, until—amazingly—he had finally won the fight. Now they were telling him he had won on a foul, that he was disqualified, that the title must be surrendered. Bet your good china the old pug was not going out singing *mea culpa.*

Kathy was angry during the speech, shouting in disgust when the President reeled off his litany of accomplishments and explained his decision to quit as nothing more than the loss of his political base in Congress: *lies, lies, more lies!* I was not disturbed; it had figured. But when the speech was over and the television commentators came on as if a good dog had died—Cronkite fumbling and apologetic, Sevareid even declaring himself *touched*—I hurt my sore throat by hollering at their deaf flickering images: ***why, you silly bastards, we're talking about a thug here, a goddamned Constitutional rapist, a pathological liar and con man, our shared common national disgrace!*** In that moment I wanted the bastard in jail, doing hard time, breaking rocks with a hammer while guarded by Jews and maybe being buggered in his cell at night by a sweaty nigger: yes, Nixon had brought out the Nixon in me. Thank you, Mr. President.

Let us not dwell on that sick, sad, strange, tearful performance in the East Room as the President told his staff people goodbye: enough of sainted dead mothers, little fathers who were great fathers despite their socioeconomic size, preoccupations with death. Enough tears, sweating upper lips, bitter jabs at the press and awkward references to plumbers. Let us take him quickly to the helicopter, give him that final jerky arms over the head gesture and watch him lift up up and away. Goodbye, Dick Nixon, goodbye. And good riddance. ●

A catalogue of corruption

Nixon's friends claimed everyone did it. They were partly right. Since 1972, the 200 officials listed below have run afoul of the law

***Louis Aceto** Alderman (D) New Haven, Conn. Arrested: Election law violation
***Tom Adams** Lt. Governor (D), Florida Censured by State House: Mismanagement, misusing a state employee for own benefit
Hugh Addonizio Mayor (D), Newark, N.J. Convicted: Conspiracy and extortion; Sentence: 10 years
Spiro Agnew Vice President (R), U.S. Pleaded no contest: Tax evasion; Sentence: 3 years probation, $10,000 fine
***John Allen** State Representative (D), Longview, Texas Convicted: State nepotism law violation; Sentence: $1,000 fine
***William Ambrogio** State Representative (D), New Haven, Conn. Arrested: Election law violation
Dale Anderson County Executive (D), Baltimore County, Maryland Convicted: Extortion and tax evasion; Sentence: 5 years
George Anderson Republican Party Treasurer (R), Florida Indicted: Implicated in Gurney case
Joe Lee Anderson State Senator (D), Arkansas Convicted: Income tax evasion
***Gail Anglada** Mayor, Millstone, N.J. Arrested: Possession of marijuana
Donald Barmack Judge, Miami, Fla. Convicted: Accepting a bribe
Edward Barrett Cook County Clerk (D), Chicago, Ill. Convicted: Bribery, receiving kickbacks; Sentence: 3 years, fined $15,000
***Isadore Bellis** City Council Majority Leader (D), Philadelphia, Pa. Convicted: Bribery, official malfeasance, election law violation
Harold Berry Putman County Commissioner, Ind. Pleaded guilty: Bribery; Sentence: 2-14 years suspended
David Biederman Deputy Attorney General, N.J. Found guilty by State Bar: Conflict of interest
George Bigal School Board member (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Convicted: Accepting unlawful gratuities; Sentence: 9 months, fined $2,000
Claude Blanchard, Jr. City Council Vice Chairman, Charleston, S.C. Indicted: Extortion
***James Blodgett** Magistrate, Detroit, Mich. Fined $1,000: "Treated women court employees in 'a vulgar' and 'tawdry' fashion"
Leonard Blondes State Legislator (D), Montgomery County, Md. Convicted: Bribery
***Frank Brasco** U.S. Congressman (D), Brooklyn, N.Y. Convicted: Conspiracy to take bribes
Vincent Brogna Judge, Mass. Censured by Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court: Misconduct
***Basil Brown** State Senator (D), Highlands Park, Mich. Arrested: Drunk driving
Paul Bryant County Commissioner, Martin County, Fla. Suspended: Malfeasance, misfeasance, neglect of duty; Indicted: soliciting bribes
Patrick Buffalino Mayor (R), Westbury, N.Y. Indicted: Bribery, grand larceny
Robert Burkhardt Secretary of State (D), N.J. Pleaded guilty: Extortion; Sentence: 3 years probation, $5,000 fine
John Campbell Atlantic County auditor, N.J. Indicted: Misconduct, extortion
Sal Capra Councilman, Kansas City, Mo. Indicted: Mail fraud
Helen Carlson State Representative (D), Tucson, Ariz. Arrested: Drunk and reckless driving
Celestino Cattuzza Councilman (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Indicted: Conspiracy and extortion
Dwight Chapin Appointments Secretary for President of U.S. (R) Convicted: Perjury; Sentence: 10-30 months
Jack Clariday Councilman, Nashville, Tenn. Council voted he resign for conflict of interest; Indicted: Bribery
William Colsey, III Republican Party Fund-raiser (R), N.J. Indicted: Bribery and conspiracy; Disbarred
Charles Colson White House Special Counsel (R) Pleaded guilty: Obstructing justice
Walter Conlon State Tax Commissioner (R), N.Y. Convicted: Bribery
John Connally U.S. Secretary of Treasury (R) ex-Governor of Texas Indicted: Bribery, perjury, obstruction of justice
Edward Connell City Manager, North Miami, Fla. Pleaded guilty: Conspiring to take bribe; Sentence: 15 months probation
William Cox State Representative (R) Charleston, Ill. Pleaded guilty: Mail fraud; Sentence: 15 months, repay $15,000
***J. Edward Crabiel** Secretary of State (D), N.J. Indicted: Bid rigging
Earl Crittenden Republican Party Chairman (R), Fla. Indicted: Implicated in Gurney case.
John Dean III Personal Counsel to the President of U.S. (R) Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy to obstruct justice; Sentence: 1-4 years
***Louise De Lauro** Alderman (D), New Haven, Conn. Arrested: Election law violation
John Di Maria Boro attorney, Lodi, N.J. Indicted: Official misconduct, bribery
Gerald De Pasquale City Clerk (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Indicted: Conspiracy and extortion
Michael De Pasquale Councilman (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Indicted: Conspiracy and extortion
John De Rose Mayor (R), Gloucester Township, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy and extortion
Edward Desautnier, Jr. Judge, Mass. Disbarred by U.S. District Court, Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court: Misconduct (bribery)
Peter Deutsch Brooklyn Republican Party Treasurer, Head Brooklyn State Tax Office (R), N.Y. Indicted: Accepting bribes
***Harold Dingee** Mayor (R), North Haven, N.Y. Arrested: Driving while impaired (drinking)
Joe Di Stefano Chairman, Hillsborough County Election Board, Fla. Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy; Sentence: 3 years, $5,000 fine
Patrick Doran Atlantic County Engineer (R), N.J. Convicted: Extortion; Sentence: 5 years, $10,000 fine
Clyde Doyal Mayor, (D), Pasadena, Tex. Convicted: Conspiracy to obtain city funds; Sentence: 1 year
John Dowdy U.S. Congressman (D), Texas Convicted: Perjury; Sentence: 18 months, $25,000 fine
Robert Duggan District Attorney (R), Allegheny County, Pa. Indicted: Income tax evasion; Found dead, probably suicide
Paul Durr Judge, Calhoun County, Illinois Suspended for one year: Willful misconduct
John Eames Grafton County Attorney, N.H. Arrested: Obscenity (showed *Deep Throat*, *The Devil in Miss Jones* at his movie house)
James Edgar Judge, Detroit, Mich. Fined $1,500: "treated women court employees in 'a vulgar' and 'tawdry' fashion"
John Ehrlichman Domestic Advisor, President of the U.S. (R) Convicted: Conspiracy, perjury; Sentence: 20 months-5 years
Angelo Errichetti Mayor (D), Camden, N.J. Indicted: Conspiracy to rig bids, perjury

*Still in office

Ray Everett State Representative (R), Ariz. Stripped of Committee Chairmanship: conflict of interest
Michael Evancho Councilman (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Indicted: Conspiracy and extortion
***Charles Evers** Mayor (D), Fayette, Miss. Indicted: Income tax evasion
***Paul Fannin** U.S. Senator (R), Ariz. Convicted: Drunk Driving; Sentence: 1 day, fined $110
Houston Feaster State Docks Director, Ala. Convicted: Income tax evasion
Ralph Fiore School Board President (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Convicted: Receiving bribe, official misconduct; Sentence: 4 years
Thomas Flaherty Jersey City Council President (D), N.J. Convicted: Conspiracy to extort, false tax returns; Sentence: 15 years
***Salvatore Franco** Assistant Town Clerk (D), New Haven, Conn. Arrested: Election law violation
Joseph Furey City Commissioner, Wildwood, N.J. Convicted: Bribery; Sentence: 3-6 years, $3,000 fine
Cornelius Gallagher U.S. Congressman (D), N.J. Pleaded guilty: Income tax evasion; Sentence: 2 years, $10,000 fine
Rev. Jesse Gann Executive Assistant, Governor George Wallace (D), Ala. Arrested: Drunk driving
Don Garrison Alderman, Little Rock, Arkansas Convicted: Larcency by bailee; Sentence: 12 years
Charles Gaskill Councilman, Brick Township, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy, bribery, official misconduct; Sentence: 1-2 years
Martin Ginsberg Judge (ex-Assemblyman), Nassau County, N.Y. Indicted: Bribery, lying to grand jury
George Goetz Brick Township Tax Assessor, N.J. Convicted: Accepting a bribe, misconduct; Sentence: 6 months, $500 fine
Frank Grayson District Attorney, Northeast Okla. Convicted: Interstate bribery, prostitution, gambling
Samuel Green, Jr. Baltimore County States Attorney, Md. Convicted: Official misconduct, obstructing justice; Sentence: 3 years
Jack Gremillion Attorney General (D), La. Convicted: Perjury; Sentence: 3 years
Nelson Gross Republican Party Chairman, N.J. Convicted: Tax fraud, perjury; Sentence: 2 years, fined $10,000
Ted Gross Youth Services Commissioner, New York, N.Y. Pleaded guilty: Accepting bribes; Sentence: 3 years
***Edward Gurney** U.S. Senator (R), Florida Indicted: Bribery, conspiracy, lying to federal grand jury
H. R. (Bob) Haldeman Chief of Staff, U.S. President (R) Indicted: Conspiracy, obstructing justice, perjury
Ferdinand Heinige Mayor (R), Little Ferry, N.J. Convicted: Misconduct in office, demanding and accepting bribes
***Bill Hobby** Lt. Governor (D), Tex. Pleaded no contest: Drunk driving; Sentence: 9 months probation, $100 fine
Tom Holmes State Representative (D), Granbury, Tex. Convicted: Theft
Fred Hubbard Alderman (D), Chicago, Ill. Pleaded guilty: Embezzlement; Sentence: 2 years, repay the $100,000
Marvin Hutcheson Putnam County Commissioner, Ind. Pleaded guilty: Bribery; Sentence: 2-14 years suspended
E. Howard Hunt White House Aide (R) Convicted: Conspiracy, bribery, wiretapping; Sentence: 2½-8 years, $10,000 fine.
Theodore Isaacs Director of State Revenue (D), Ill. Convicted: Income tax evasion, bribery; Sentence: 3 years, fined $50,000
Hulan Jack State Assemblyman (D), New York, N.Y. Convicted: Extortion; Sentence: 3 months, $5,000 fine.
Robert Jacks Township Council President, Woodbridge, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Bribery, conspiracy; Sentence: 2-6 years, $2,000 fine.
Richard Jackson Mayor (R), Atlantic City, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy, extortion; Sentence: 3 years
Joseph Jambrone Alderman (D), Chicago, Ill. Convicted: Income tax evasion, bribery
Roy Jenkins Mayor (R), Hoffman Estates, Ill. Pleaded guilty: Filing false income tax returns
Leroy Johnson State Senator (D), Atlanta, Ga. Indicted: Income tax evasion
Guy Jones State Senator (D), Ark. Convicted: Income tax evasion; Sentence: 3 years probation, $5,000 fine
Ronald Jones Township Council President, Brick Township, N.J. Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy, soliciting a bribe
Herbert Kalmbach Attorney to U.S. President (R) Pleaded guilty: Violation Fed. Corrupt Practices Act; Sentence: 6 mos., $10,000 fine
Thomas Keane Alderman (D), Chicago, Ill. Indicted: Mail fraud, conspiracy
John Kenny Hudson County Democratic leader (D), N.J. Convicted: Income tax evasion; Sentence: $30,000 fine
Otto Kerner Federal Judge, ex-Governor, Ill., (D) Convicted: Income tax evasion, perjury, bribery; Sentence: 3 years, $50,000 fine
John Kervick State Treasurer (D), N.J. Pleaded guilty: Bribery; Sentence: 3 years probation, $10,000 fine.
Edward Khayat Jackson Kounty Supervisor, Miss. Pleaded no contest: Income tax evasion
Ben Klein State Senator (D), Denver, Colo. Convicted: Income tax evasion
Richard Kleindienst Attorney General of U.S. (R) Pleaded guilty: Inaccurate testimony under oath; Sentence: 30 days, $1,000 fine
Walter Knapp State Representative (D), Amarillo, Tex. Convicted: Theft
Baldo Kristovich County Public Administrator, Los Angeles County, Calif. Convicted: Perjury, preparing false evidence
Egil Krogh Chief Asst. to Chief of Staff to U.S. President (R) Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy violate Constitutional rts. of person
Casmir Kulik Councilman (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Indicted: Conspiracy and extortion
Donald Kuss Councilman (R), Islip, N.Y. Convicted: Bribery
***Frank Kuta** Alderman (D), Chicago, Ill. Indicted: Mail fraud, extortion, filing false income tax return
George Lamb City Controller (D), East Chicago, Ind. Indicted: Bribery; Committed suicide
Frederick La Rue White House Aide (R) Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy to obstruct justice
Karles La Sane City Commissioner (D), Atlantic City, N.J. Convicted: Extortion, conspiracy; Sentence: 4 years
G. Gordon Liddy White House Aide, Committee to Reelect President Counsel (R) Convicted: Bribery, wiretapping; Sentence: 20 years
William Loughram Republican Party Fund-raiser (R), N.J. Convicted: Extortion, bribery; Sentence: 2 years, $2,000 fine
Andrew Luba School Board member (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Convicted: Accepting unlawful gratuities; Sentence: 9 months, fined $2,000
Anthony Lucero State Senator (D), Beralillo, N. Mex Indicted: Bribery and conspiracy to bribe
Edward Mach School Board member (D), Lackawanna, N.Y. Convicted: Accepting unlawful gratuities; Sentence: 9 months, fined $2,000
Thomas Mackell District Attorney (D), Queens County, N.Y. Convicted: Obstructing justice; Sentence: 6 months
Jeb Magruder Director, Commerce Dept. Office of Policy Dev. (R) Pleaded guilty: Conspiracy obstruct justice; Sentence: 10 mos.
Henry Maier Mayor (D), Milwaukee, Wis. Court held he held secret legislative meetings, injunction to prevent repetition
Nicholas Mamula School Board member, Lackawanna, N.Y. Convicted: Accepting unlawful gratuities; Sentence: 9 months, $1,000 fine
Robert Mardian Assistant Attorney General of U.S. (R) Indicted: Conspiracy to obstruct justice
James McCord, Jr. Security Chief, CRP and Republican National Committee (R) Convicted: Burglary, wiretapping; Sentence:1-5 years
Joseph McCrane State Treasurer (R), New Jersey Indicted: Bribery, misconduct, conspiracy
John Meicher U.S. Congressman (D), Mont. Convicted: Drunk driving; Sentence: Enter program to rehabilitate drinking driver
Joseph Menna Mayor (R), Gloucester Township, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Extortion, conspiracy; Sentence: 5 years probation
William Mills U.S. Congressman (R), Md. Accused: Receiving secret campaign funds; Found dead, possible suicide
Clarence Mitchell State Senator (D), Md. Pleaded no contest: Failure to file income tax returns, ordered to pay $50.47 owed
Donald Mitchell Committeeman, Glouchester Township, N.J. Convicted: Extortion and conspiracy; Sentence: 1 year

John Mitchell Attorney General of U.S. (R) Indicted: Conspiracy, obstruction of justice, perjury

***Eugene Mooney** State Representative (R), Fla. Unindicted co-conspirator in Gurney case

Peter Moraites State Assembly speaker (R), N.J. Convicted: Receiving illegal fees; Sentence: 9 months

Hudson Moyer State Representative (D), Amarillo, Tex. Convicted: Theft

Ira Murphy State Representative (D), Memphis, Tenn. Convicted: Failure to file income tax returns

William Murphy Councilman, Providence, R.I. Convicted: Bribery

Patrick Musto School Board president, Union City, N.J. Convicted: Taking bribes; Sentence: 2½ years, $20,000 fine

Gus Mutscher State Representative (D), Speaker of House, Tex. Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy; Sentence: 5 years probation

Richard Nixon President of U.S. (R) Unindicted co-conspirator (obstruction of justice); Resigned during impeachment proceedings

Richard Nowakowski Chairman County Board of Supervisors, Milwaukee, Wis. Indicted: Violation State Corrupt Practices Act

Michael O'Neill Councilman, Briok Township, N.J. Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy, soliciting a bribe

Norman Ordoneaux State Representative (D), Lake Arthur, La. Convicted: Income tax evasion

John Osorio State Insurance Commissioner (D), Tex Indicted: Fraud, perjury, embezzlement, conspiracy

Maurice Osser Chairman City Election Commission, Phila., Pa. Convicted: Extortion, mail fraud; Sentence: 6 years, $19,000 fine

Kenneth Parkinson Committee Reelect President Attorney (R) Indicted: Conspiracy, obstruction of justice

***David Pearce** State Commissioner of Agriculture (D), La. Indicted: Theft, public payroll extortion, public bribery

Luke Penta Councilman, Highlands, N.J. Indicted: Soliciting a bribe and official misconduct

Joseph Pfingst Supreme Court Judge (R), Nassau County, N.Y. Convicted: Bankruptcy fraud

Jimmie Phagan District Attorney, Witchita County, Tex. Convicted: Fraudulent conduct

W. Fred Phillips State Senator (D), Miami, Okla. Convicted: Perjury

James Pine State Senator (D), Md. Unindicted co-conspirator in Anderson case

Edward Pinger Mayor (R), Hoffman Estates, Ill. Pleaded guilty: Bribery, conspiracy, filing false income tax returns

***Bertram Podell** U.S. Congressman (D), Brooklyn, N.Y. Indicted: Bribery, conflict of interest, conspiracy to obstruct justice

Arthur Ponzio City Commissioner (D), Atlantic City, N.J. Convicted: Extortion, conspiracy; Sentence: 6 years

Herbert Porter Scheduling Director Committee Reelect President Pleaded guilty: Lying to FBI; Sentence: 5-15 months

Joseph Potempa Alderman (R), Chicago, Ill. Pleaded guilty: Extortion, mail fraud, income tax evasion; Sentence: 1 year and 1 day

James Price County Council Chairman (D), Charleston, S.C. Convicted: Extortion, conspiracy; Sentence: 5 years

V. V. Ramsey Harris County Commissioner, Tex. Convicted: Accepting bribe, mail fraud; Sentence: 5 years, $21,000 fine

***Paul Rao, Sr.** Senior Judge, U.S. Customs Court (D) Indicted: perjury

David Ratliff State Senator (D), Stamford, Tex. Convicted: Embezzling state funds; Sentence: 10 years probation

Edward Reinecke Lt. Governor (R), Calif. Convicted: Perjury

C. Donald Robertson Attorney General (D), W. Va. Pleaded guilty: Bribery and conspiracy; Sentence: 5 years, $15,000 fine

James Ryan County Commissioner, Las Vegas, Nev. Convicted: Bribery, use of interstate facilities in aid of racketeering

Nicholas Sacorafas City Attorney, Detroit, Mich. Indicted: Bribery

John Schaefer Councilman (D), Baltimore, Md. Indicted: Conflict of interest

James Scott State Legislator (D), Md. Indicted: Transporting 40 lbs heroin; found murdered

Tommy Shannon State Representative (D), Tex. Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy; Sentence: 5 years probation

Thomas Sheppard Councilman (D), Los Angeles, Calif. Convicted: Bribery; Sentence: 1-14 years

Paul Sherwin N.J. Secretary of State (R) Convicted: Extortion, bribery; Sentence: 2 years, $2,000 fine

W. Bernard Smith State Senator (D), W. Va. Expelled from State Senate for vote fraud

William Somers Mayor (R), Atlantic City, N.J. Convicted: Extortion; Sentence: 2½ years

Gerald Springer Councilman, Mayor-elect (D), Cincinnati, O. Resigned due to federal vice investigation.

Joseph Stapleton Hudson County Treasurer (D), N.J. Convicted: Conspiracy to extort; Sentence: 6 months

Casimer Staszcuck Alderman (R), Chicago, Ill. Convicted: Extortion; Sentence: 18 months

Joel Stokes Alderman, Atlanta, Ga. Convicted: Embezzlement, misapplication of funds; Sentence: 3 years

Gordon Strachan Staff Assistant to Advisor to U.S. President (R) Indicted: Conspiracy to obstruct justice, perjury

Jay Stuckey State Representative (R), Ariz. Stripped of Committee Chairmanship due to conflict of interest

Seymour Thaler Supreme Court Judge (D), Queens County, N.Y. Convicted: Perjury, possession stolen securities

John Thompson State Legislator (R), Ill. Pleaded guilty: Failure to file income tax return

D. Louis Tonti Exec. Dir., Highway Authority (D), N.J. Pleaded guilty: Extortion, conspiracy bribe; Sentence: 3 years, $10,000 fine

Ernest Tordo Zoning Board Chairman, Jackson Township, N.J. Convicted: Bribery; Sentence: 4 months

Seymour Trammell Finance Chrmn., Wallace for President, 1968; Ala. Financial Dir. (D) Convicted: Income tax evasion; Sentence, 4 years

Jerome Troy Judge, Dorchester, Mass. Disbarred Massachusetts Supreme Court: Misconduct, abusing defendants, perjury

Louis Turco City Council President (D), Newark, N.J. Pleaded guilty: Income tax evasion; Sentence: 1 year

James Turner State Senator (R), N.J. Convicted: Conspiracy to plant drugs in home of Democratic opponent; Sentence: 5 years

Thomas Wagner State Representative (D), Albany, Ark. Pleaded guilty: Receiving kickbacks

Harold Washington State Representative (D), Ill. Pleaded no contest: Failure to file income tax returns; Sentence: 40 days

J. Irving Whalley U.S. Congressman (R), Pa. Pleaded guilty: Mail fraud, obstruction of justice; Sentence: 3 years, $11,000 fine

Thomas Whelan Mayor (D), Jersey City, N.J. Convicted: Conspiring to extort, filing false income tax returns; Sentence: 15 years

Jack Wheller Broward County Comptroller, Fla. Convicted: Perjury

Paul Wigoda Alderman (D), Chicago, Ill. Indicted: Extortion, filing false income tax returns

***Calvin Williams** State Assemblyman (D), Brooklyn, N.Y. Convicted: Perjury; Indicted: Bribery

***Bob Wilson** U.S. Congressman (R), San Diego, Calif. U.S. District Court ruled he misused mailing privilege; No sentence or fine

Melvin Wodzinski Pres. Lackawanna Council (D), N.Y. Indicted: Extortion, conspiracy

Walter Wolfe Hudson County Democratic Party Chairman (D), N.J. Convicted: Conspiracy to extort

Victor Woodhull Freeholder, Morris County, N.J. Convicted: Income tax evasion

Ray Wyatt State Senator (D), Ashville, Ala. Convicted: Receiving, selling stolen automobiles; Sentence: 5 years

Henry Wyssling Suffolk County Commissioner (R), N.Y. Indicted: Perjury

David Young White House aide (R) Indicted: Violation Constitutional rights of a person; Granted immunity

Charles Youngblood, Jr. State Senator (D), Detroit, Michigan Convicted: Bribery, conspiracy; Sentence: 60 days, $2,000 fine

Edwin Z'Berg State Assemblyman (D), Sacramento, Calif. Convicted: Drunk driving; Sentence: 2 days; 28 days suspended

Walking Short

By Cammy Wilson

His biographer. W. R. Morris, called him a "living monument to justice." *Rolling Stone* called the film based on his life, *Walking Tall*, the best movie of the year. Magazines told and retold the story: he was the Serpico of the South, a Billy Jack who fought with his fists instead of his feet, an honest Rasputin they couldn't kill, though he suffered eight gunshot and seven stab wounds; a six-and-a-half-foot hulk of man who had been in so many fights that plastic surgeons used him as a live model, and whose face, in spite of their efforts, bore undeniable witness to his courage—a drooping eye, a crooked mouth and enough keloid tissue to cover a kettledrum.

Long before his death in a car accident last week, Buford Pusser had become a legend in his own time, a legend that touched a nerve in the heartland. Across the country, in small backwater towns, they stood in line to see his story—at last count, *Walking Tall* had grossed over $50 million, and its producers were hammering out plans for a sequel—this time to star Buford himself, and not just a pale Hollywood stand-in.

All of which makes the question even more interesting now that he is dead—who was Buford Pusser, anyway? If you ask the people where he came from, in McNairy County, Tenn., or even his own relatives, you'll get quite a different picture from the one that has been flashing on movie screens for the past two years. The people of McNairy, for instance, rebuffed Pusser's bid for another term as sheriff in 1972. The incumbent sheriff kept his job by asking this simple question: "If your child had to be arrested, which candidate would you prefer to do it?" In fact, the Buford Pusser idolized by millions of moviegoers was such an anathema to the mayor and aldermen of Selmer, Tenn., that they formally reprimanded a Jackson, Tenn., newspaper for writing that the movie was "the true story of ex-sheriff Buford Pusser of McNairy County. . . ." "The plot of this story," wrote the mayor, "has little, if any, resemblance to the truth." The day after his death, the mayor, Billy Joe Glover, added, "I just hope somebody has the opportunity to come back and ask the right questions."

Measured against his own legend—told in the movie *Walking Tall*—the real Buford Pusser fell short indeed. When he died last week, few tears were shed in Selmer, Tenn.

Question: how did Pusser get scarred up the first time around? The movie has a dramatic answer to that one, an answer that, not unexpectedly, redounds to the credit of its hero. Pusser goes to a local hangout called the Lucky Spot. There, accompanied by a jovial school chum, a befuddled Pusser walks into a loaded dice game and emerges scarred for life, his chest and back cut into decorative ribbons. To get his revenge, Pusser later returns to the club, wielding a club and beating the bad guys senseless. He then takes back the money due him from the crooked game of chance. Falsely arrested for robbery, he stands tall, remaining in the county to vindicate his name in spite of a crooked judge and a craven jury.

It is true that Pusser got carved up over a dice game, but beyond that, legend and reality split. As Peewee Sewell, who later became Pusser's deputy, recalled it, "He simply got cut up in a drunken brawl." Nevertheless, Pusser was determined to even the score. "It was one of those things that keep eating you," Pusser explained long afterward. Two years later, he arranged to have someone punch his time card at the Union Bag Company in Chicago, and set off with two friends to return to the Plantation Club, a roadside tavern in Mississippi just across the state line from dry McNairy County. Using a long hickory stick which he admitted he brought with him—"'bout two inches in diameter," he remembered—Pusser "cleaned" the head of the club owner so badly that he was hospitalized for two weeks. According to his victim, Pusser also cleaned out the cash register to the tune of $1,176. Recently, Pusser talked freely about that night of revenge; yet, when he was extradited from Chicago to Mississippi in January 1960 to stand trial for assault with intent to murder and rob, he

The writer is a free lance and reporter for the Dayton Daily News.

ILLUSTRATION BY VICTOR VALLA

swore that he had never made that trip south.

Interestingly enough, the only witness to the original knifing that supposedly justified revenge was found dead not long thereafter. The producer of *Walking Tall*, Mort Briskin, claimed that "he wound up dead in the river." Pusser disagreed. He died in a car wreck, Pusser said—"just an accident, I reckon."

Question: how did it happen that Pusser became sheriff in the first place? Like everyone else, Pusser won on votes, of course, but the circumstances were somewhat unusual. In the movie version, incumbent sheriff James Dickey is shown as a corrupt, venal politician who attempts to kill Pusser by running him off the road. Not even Pusser's mother bought that version. "No," she admitted, "Dickey never tried to kill Buford. The movie people just had to fix something in there." If anything, the theories ran in the other direction, because in real life it was Dickey, not Pusser, who was killed in a car crash, a crash that was never explained and that took place just two days before the election. Pusser won against the dead man by a mere 300 votes.

According to townspeople, Pusser had had it in for Dickey well before the election. Sheriff Dickey had once made Pusser return a load of beer that he had "confiscated" from a lady tavern owner named Louise Hathcock. Dickey's widow later regretted that she was "too shook up" to have an autopsy done when her husband's body was found in the crumpled wreckage of his car. Not that it would have made a difference. "There wouldn't have been anything we could have done about it anyway," Dickey's brother pointed out. "We couldn't have proved who did it."

Question: speaking of the aforementioned Louise Hathcock, how did she also end up dead? There was never any doubt among the people of McNairy that Louise might someday come to a violent end. After all, she had killed her own husband in self-defense, and an FBI agent had once suggested that "Delilah would have been a gentle soul in comparison." But why at the hands of Sheriff Pusser? In the movie version Louise Hathcock attempts to kill Pusser before scores of guests at a Christmas party at her tavern; he then kills her in self-defense. In fact, Pusser shot Louise several times in her bedroom at the Shamrock Motel on February 1, 1966. There were no witnesses to verify Pusser's claim that Louise had shot first, after he had approached her with a warrant for her arrest (two motel clients claimed that Louise had stolen $12 from them). There were, however, two motel employees who might have seen—or heard—important circumstantial evidence. Both are long since dead. One, Howard Carroll, allegedly walked into Elam Creek and drowned a few years later. Asked what happened to the second employee, Pusser replied, "Somebody burnt him alive in his house." Club owners in the area speculated that Pusser may have had a grudge against Louise. They claimed that Pusser—like many law-enforcement officers in the area—was on the take, and that shortly before her death Louise had ceased to pay Pusser her protection—about $600 a month. "I've been told she had stopped paying him off," said one state-line sheriff.

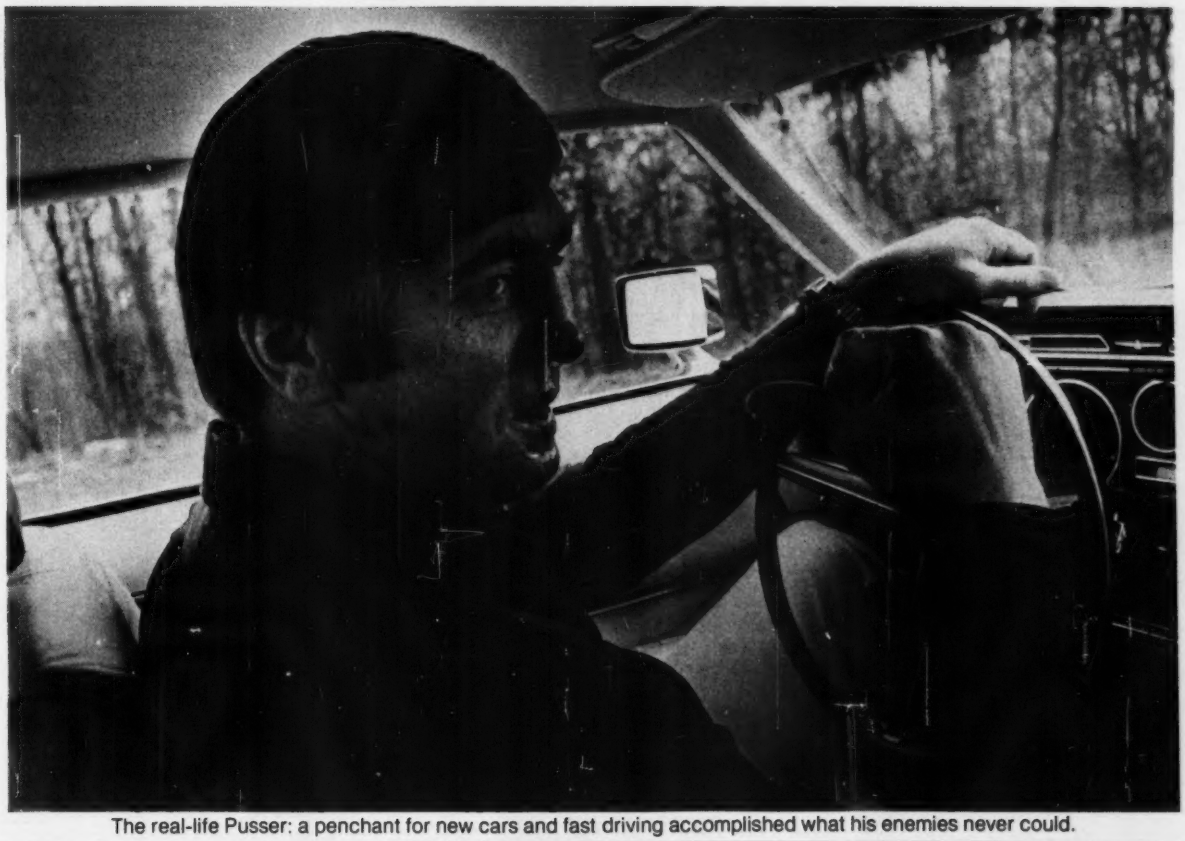
Played by Joe Don Baker in *Walking Tall*, Pusser is almost killed in an ambush.

The strangest occurrence of all was the one that brought Pusser his first national fame in 1967, via a 10-minute CBS news clip. The story, according to legend: Pusser returns home at 4 a.m. and soon thereafter receives a telephone call to go to a lonely dirt road because of "trouble." His wife, Pauline, leaves with him. As soon as they reach the spot, two carloads of crooks armed with machine guns—presumably bootleggers out to kill the man who would drive them from the state—block off Pusser's escape route and open fire. The back of Pauline's head is blown off, and Pusser is wounded severely in the chin. That's the legend. But there were no witnesses to the crime and precious little evidence of the ambush itself, except for some empty shells and bullet holes in Pusser's car. No one was ever arrested for the murder.

There are other theories of what might have happened, one of which surfaced in Pusser's biography, *The Twelfth of August:* "A few hours after the ambush," writes Morris, "rumors circulated in McNairy County that Buford Pusser had murdered his wife and shot himself to cover up the crime."

Diane Pusser, Bufford's stepdaughter by Pauline's first marriage, has even suggested a possible motive. Shortly before the murder, her mother called her in Memphis and asked her "to please come home. She told me things were going badly with her and Buford, and she was just upset. That was right before she was killed." Pauline's friends have told how Pauline would quiz them about Buford's various affairs. Some have claimed that the night before the alleged ambush, Pauline Pusser confronted a "black-haired woman" with the knowledge that she was going out with Buford.

Asked about Pauline Pusser's death, one lawman said, "Well, it's just like havin' a squirrel dog. He tracks and he trails and he tracks and he trails, but he keeps comin' back to the same tree. When you look up there, you can't see anything,


WIDE WORLD

The real-life Pusser: a penchant for new cars and fast driving accomplished what his enemies never could.

but you know he's been there."

Even assuming the best—that Pusser was not responsible for any of McNairy County's long list of unexplained murders during those years—the record is still blemished. For instance, there is that part of the legend that has Pusser clubbing bootleggers about the ears and driving them from the very heart of bootleg country. If that is true, why all the cases of booze under Buford's bed? "I remember one time he busted a U-Haul trailer full of untaxed whiskey," recalled Diane. "I looked under my bed and there was a case of McIntosh Scotch and a case of half-pints, a case of vodka and another case of some kind of whiskey in his bedroom . . . If he was supposed to be putting people in jail for hauling whiskey, why was he keeping so much of it?" she asked.

Nor was that all that bothered Diane and other Pusser observers in town. Even when he was working as sheriff, Pusser only made $10,500 a year. From 1970 on, Pusser had no employment at all, yet he managed to support two children at home, trade cars frequently and travel at his own expense. Pusser himself admitted that he paid no income tax in 1971 because he "did not make a dime" during 1970. "I don't like what he did to get the money," Diane said earlier this year. "How could a man drive a new car every three months when he wasn't working? He would tell everybody, 'I'm still paying for Pauline's funeral,' and then in three months he'd be driving a brand new car."

Pusser had an explanation for that, but it was not a very good one. He'd tell anyone who questioned him on it that he would purchase a car wholesale from a dealer, drive the car thousands of miles and then return it to the dealer for another new car. "They'd clean it up real good, and take it to the sale, and it would bring as much as I had to give for it," he said.

A year ago, Pusser was driving a 1973 white Thunderbird. When he lost control and crashed to his death last week, he was behind the wheel of a 1974 Corvette—a convertible with a lateral roll bar overhead. He had just passed the car in which his daughter Dwana, age 13, and a friend were riding, as they returned home from the McNairy County Fair. The authorities at first put out reports that there had been no foul play. For any other citizen of McNairy, such bulletins would not have been necessary. But Pusser, according to legend, was always the victim of foul play, and his admirers across the country—if not in McNairy—might jump to the conclusion that Pusser had been bumped off by a gang of bootleggers settling old grudges. So Dr. Harry L. Peeler tried to put such speculation to rest. Pusser, he announced, had died of a broken neck, "popped when he hit the dash, or something." Still, talk of sawed-through tie rods persisted, and the investigation continued.

The day before his death, Pusser had traveled to Memphis to announce his starring role in the sequel to *Walking Tall*, which was to be called, simply, *Buford*. The film company has yet to decide which way to move now that Pusser is dead. But one thing is sure—most citizens of McNairy are not grieving. Whatever sort of a sheriff Buford had made, he was not much of a citizen. Since 1970, he had been arrested on charges of larceny, official oppression, assault with a deadly weapon and destruction of property. When not autographing pick-handles—a symbol he adopted shortly after the release of the movie— Pusser spent much of his considerable free time slapping the citizens of McNairy around on general principles. The legendary Pusser had become, in his retirement, a public nuisance.

Perhaps the best epitaph came several months before Pusser's death, from a law-enforcement officer across the state line. Asked what he thought of the nation's new folk hero, former Sheriff Grady Bingham of Mississippi drawled, "As far as I'm concerned, Pusser is just a thug."●

The New York Times
NIXON RESIGNS
HE URGES A TIME OF 'HEALING';
FORD WILL TAKE OFFICE TODAY
'Sacrifice' Is Praised;
Kissinger to Remain
The 37th President
Is First to Quit Post
Special Issue
THE
HEALING BEGINS

End of the mega-story

By Alexander Cockburn

At around 9:15 on the evening of Thursday, August 8, a vast industry began to run down. The press was not going to have Richard Nixon to kick around any more, at least not as President.

Excitement before the big letdown was appropriately intense. A colleague of mine barely left the White House pressroom in three days. Haggard and tearful press spokesmen trotted on and off stage, denying, admitting, conceding. Art Buchwald dashed back from his vacation, and appeared in the White House pressroom to record the great event. All over the country television news teams took up positions to record the views of politicians, men in the street, women in the street, probably even dogs in the street. Newspapers hauled up their long prepared political obituaries.

I elected to watch the proceedings in the Washington *Post* newsroom. It was not a scene of good cheer or vulgar triumph. The atmosphere seemed glum as Nixon started resigning, and was even glummer by the time he had finished. Part of the glumness could, I imagine, have been ascribed to emotions of sympathy for a man visibly going down for the third time, but a slice at least of the general gloom had to do with an oppressive sense that the ball game was over.

For two years every newspaper in the country and preeminently the Washington *Post* had been doing well by being good, virtuous and happy participants in the destruction of Richard Nixon. Never has the news industry enjoyed greater good fortune. As the editor of the Washington *Post*, Ben Bradlee, himself remarked: "Nixon did more for the press than any President in recent history. He made folk heroes out of reporters. He made some newspapers household words. And he provided more copy, more headlines, more magazine footage than any man since World War II."

Trillions of words were produced over the last two years about Watergate.

As the biggest political story in history roared to a climax, the denizens of the nation's news rooms played philosopher, moralist and historian—all the while looking toward an uncertain future

Most of them were rolled toward the Ultimate Questions: what did he know, when did he know it, what did he do, when will he trip up? The continued existence of the ultimate questions generated the simple emotion of curiosity which impelled people to slog across the endless sand dunes of verbiage. Other things were generated out of this curiosity: the sudden boom in popularity of investigative journalism; in intricate and lengthy articles about political scandal, institutional scandal, financial scandal. Two magazines, even, were conceived under this Watergate star: a Washington supplement of *Rolling Stone* (although participants in this venture are vague as to its shape, form and publication date, speaking vaguely of "sometime in October," at which time the supplement will appear inside *Rolling Stone*), edited by Richard Goodwin, which is allegedly soon appearing, and *Harper's Weekly*, which got its putative start in life hitched to the Watergate wagon and which will appear next January. These projects and others like them were conceived in the mood of political alertness generated by Watergate.

Then, on August 8, Nixon played his last trick and resigned. All over the country stunned journalists realized that the worst had happened—the trauma and the agony were over. There was nothing left to write but hymns to the good new life and the process of healing.

So before memories fade and the news clips are lost, we ought to take a look at the press in Nixon's last days. Think of it as a look at a vast factory at peak production: typewriters roaring along, airwaves clogged with news. What, in those last weeks, was the performance of the media really like?

More than once in the weeks that preceded his resignation, I had the feeling that the terminal dissociation from reality that reputedly afflicted Nixon had successfully transmitted itself to his old enemies in the media. So many of the same elements seemed to be conspicuously present. Maudlin sentimentality vanquished common sense. Bouts of strange serenity interrupted more mundane attempts to interpret the daily flow of events.

Actually I think the media arrived

Alexander Cockburn writes regularly on the press for The Village Voice.

ART BY DAVID PRESTONE

at this terminal state rather sooner than Nixon himself. It was in the last few weeks of the proceedings of the House Judiciary Committee that dissociation, or even schizophrenia, set in. On the one hand, journalists composed reasonably accurate portrayals of the actual politics of the committee: the efforts of Rodino to save the proceedings from the "wild men," to allow the center factions room for maneuver and the lengthiest possible time for agony and writhing calculated to impress constituents back home. Then, on the other hand, there were the columnists—McGrory, Kraft, Lewis and others—who were there to promote the whole event as history, and dignified history at that. It was astonishing to sit in the hearings, view the proceedings as they trundled along, watch some congressman with a disgraceful voting record utter a few banalities and then discover the transmutation of this material into ecstatic paeans to democracy in the newspaper the next day.

It seems to me that what happened in the final weeks was that the media sensed they were going to win, and that Nixon was going to lose. But nonetheless twin paranoias remained: that he still might wriggle off the hook and that whatever happened the press would appear to be vindictive assassins. Hence the constant references to the system, due process and the like.

Over the past two years a fairly predictable pattern in the process of expelling Nixon from office began to recur. Infantrymen, in the shape of investigators, research staffs on the various committees of prosecution, would move forward clearing the ground, discovering and then reporting back to HQ the existence of some new trench full of maggots. Then the officer corps, in the shape of opinion-shapers and news laureates, would pace grandly over the newly acquired territory, shooting the wounded amid repeated declamations of the Constitution. Then a lull would occur, in which the high command would fearfully suspect that the enemy might have some new trick up his sleeve, might convince neutrals of his good faith, might even counterattack with disastrous results.

Just before the final assault on Nixon's bunker, this fear of counterattack reached a high pitch of intensity. The media became really worried about accusations of bias. CBS circulated memos advising restraint in coverage of the Presidency. The New York *Times* began to play down its Watergate coverage. It was at this point that *Time* gave its cover to the theme of the Press and the Presidency, in an obvious attempt to set up some sort of defense in the event of defeat at the hands of the White House and an ugly subsequent trial for war crimes. It was the sheer sense of relief, the sense that they finally, definitely had the President on the run, that in the last weeks led journalists into such thickets of purple abandon. They would get Nixon before he got them. Thus we had Joseph Kraft with his announcement on July 28 that "from the crucible of impeachment there now emerges a new national consensus on the presidency. It combines Southern constitutionalism and the progressive idealism of the West with Eastern liberalism. . .the country now moves towards impeachment united as rarely before." We had the myth of the "New South" propounded—an elitist liberal notion if there ever was one, and one which William V. Shannon in the New York *Times* dryly pointed out had been recurring with monotonous regularity since the 1880s. If there was ever a moment in which Nixon's defenders could legitimately have proposed that the media were engaged in an abandoned attempt to drive him from office, I think it would have been in those last days before Nixon—answering their plea—drove himself from office with the June 23 tape.

Watergate made folk heroes of reporters. The gloom after resignation had to do with a sense that the game was over

What happened in those days was a victory of creative pressure from the media. The press spoke about trauma, and congressmen pronounced themselves traumatized; the press spoke about agony, and congressmen were obediently agonized; the press spoke about awesomeness and dignity and emotion, and the congressmen, fresh from factional operations backstage, returned to the footlights and cried.

The press really ended its Watergate campaign on July 31, the day after the House panel took its final vote on Nixon's defiance of subpoenas and ended its proceedings. On that Wednesday morning the New York *Times* ran the last headline of more than one column until the three-line effort of Tuesday, August 6, the day after Nixon publicly confessed. In the interim everyone was preparing for the jolly "holocaust" and "trauma" of impeachment proceedings in the full House and then the Senate. Many journalists started to take vacations, to ponder the parlous condition of the nation in such soothing crucibles as Martha's Vineyard or East Hampton.

Other journalists were engaged in last-minute negotiations with publishers for impeachment books, administering the last spit and polish to their expense-account holders, working out which congressman or senator they would be best advised to follow throughout the proceedings. The Watergate production line, slowed down a little to allow the workers to take a much needed rest, was still running at full power.

On July 30 James Reston wrote, "The main change here in the last couple of weeks is that the Capital is beginning to get used to the idea of impeachment and is starting to think beyond the idea of the debate in the House of Representatives." The pace, as Reston's idiom indicates, was still somewhat leisured. I think that enviable meteorologist on the Washington *Post*, whose task it is to compose editorials about the seasons, hit the mood rather well: "July has built up a reputation over the past two dozen centuries—since a man called Julius Caesar decided to name a month after himself—as a time of nature's silence, when the sun hangs low and mutes the earth with blue hazes and slow days. It is nature's midsummer's sleep, we think."

It is true that the Washington *Post* ran a couple of stories on Sunday, July 28, one from Lou Cannon in San Clemente (reporting that all around San Clemente the Presidential industry was collapsing, that White House aides were being evicted from motels) and one from Woodward and Bernstein in Washington (telling of inexplicable Presidential serenity), which indicated collapse in the morale of the White House staff, and possible attrition in the sanity of the President. But these reports were the exceptions to general silence and torpor. The New York *Times* had no such coverage.

Already, at the beginning of resignation week, the press' commanding role in Watergate, achieved by feats of investigation and vocabulary, had started to vanish. In the final phase of the Judiciary Committee the media were active and creative participants. In the final week of the Nixon Presidency they reverted to what is sometimes described as their traditional role, the factual reporting of decisions and events over which they had no influence or purchase. Thus on Wednesday, August 7, Woodward and Bernstein again portrayed "the dismay" prevalent among the White House staff. " 'I don't mean to be alarmist,' one source with first-

ILLUSTRATION BY BERNARD D'ANDREA

The abrupt end of the political story of the century wrought havoc in magazine offices across the country. *Time* and *Newsweek*, with their legions of correspondents, voluminous files and late closing times were, of course, best equipped to handle the story—indeed, they had been preparing for it for months—and both came through with impressive Special Editions and press runs of more than half a million above normal. But for other publications, the week was a nightmare.

Rolling Stone turned up on newsstands the morning after Nixon's swan song with a piece on "Nixon's New Defenders." The paper's staff had to live with that for two weeks, *Stone*'s newsstand life.

Things were even worse for *New York* magazine. They *had* a Gerry Ford cover all set and ready to go. The problem was, the two Ford stories that went with it were set in a world in which Gerald Ford was Vice President. Eventually, *New York* ended up with a cover on the MacDonald's hamburger chain. Only a Joseph Kraft column inside acknowledged the week's momentous events.

The monthlies had it a lot easier. *Harper*'s reports that no major changes in copy were made necessary by the resignation. *Atlantic* merely had to change the tenses on a story about Henry Kissinger.

As for *New Times*: during the course of that chaotic week, we changed covers twice. Our original cover story (above), on the last holdouts in the Nixon bunker, became dated on Monday, when Nixon released the incriminating tape. Larry King's comparison of Nixon and LBJ was replaced as a cover Wednesday with resignation obviously imminent. Then artist Bill Nelson arrived from Richmond, Va., to whip up what became our cover that historic week.

hand knowledge said, 'and it has to be said delicately, but the President will not listen to anyone, not really listen. . .He's serene, I'd say serene, but not in touch with reality.' " In months gone by this kind of stuff—allegations of catatonia by high staffers to the best known of the Watergate journalists—might have had an active influence on political events. But by August 7, this was no longer the case. Buzhardt, in fact, knew of the crucial tape on July 23; others in the White House shortly after. No Deep Throat communicated this to the media. With all the talk of sources, this prime secret did not get out. History, as it were, had sprinted past news, and news became really a matter of headlines and nothing much else.

Thus, appropriately enough on Thursday, August 8, the day of the resignation speech, the morning news had entirely to do with headlines. Radio stations announced that the Providence *Journal Bulletin* and the Phoenix *Gazette* had forecast resignation.

From midday Thursday through Monday the story belonged almost entirely to television. Watching Walter Cronkite settle comfortably into his chair at seven o'clock on Thursday evening, I had a hint of the feelings a condemned man must have when the hangman enters the cell to assess height and specific gravity.

He had that tincture of *gravitas* reserved for truly great events, like funerals or space shots. "Tonight," he intoned, "he's going on television reportedly to tell the nation that he is quitting, the ultimate victim of the Watergate scandal that destroyed his administration." If Nixon was cocking a furtive eye at the box right then, still pondering some last-minute delaying tactic, then he must have known the jig was up. All week Haig and Kissinger had been resigning him, and now Walter had added the finishing touches. At times like those, newsprint falls behind television as does the slug behind the cheetah. It's not a matter of *content*, in the sense of interesting things being said. I have in front of me the entire CBS transcript of broadcasting between 7 p.m. and midnight on the night of resignation. It runs to about 148 well-filled quarto pages. News and interesting commentary could, I suppose, be boiled down to Nixon's actual speech and maybe three or four pages besides.

What happens is that people simply have an overpowering desire for noise that seems like news. They want history to be held on instant replay, and then constantly replayed. Hence, I think, Dan Rather's fall from grace among his liberal admirers, when he lauded Nixon's speech and allowed Roger Mudd to sneak by him

with some incisive nastiness about what Nixon did not say. But Rather, more than Mudd, showed himself to be the proper inheritor of Walter's mantle when it finally falls from those mighty shoulders, because he instinctively realized that the proper thing to do after an historic speech is simply to make a noise, a sort of melodic notation of the kind with which Greek dramatists constantly afflicted their choruses. Thus Rather, following Cronkite and Sevareid, merely quacked. "When history takes a look at it as one of Nixon's, if not his finest hour, it needs to be made clear and cannot be reemphasized too often, as the President made clear in his speech, there is no joy in this for anyone tonight." This doesn't make sense, unless you decode it by isolating the musical notes that Rather felt appropriate: "History . . . Nixon's . . . finest hour . . . cannot be reemphasized too often . . . no joy . . . sadness tempered with awe . . . process of law . . . awe . . . touch of class . . . touch of majesty . . . touching that nerve . . . revere . . . respect the Presidency . . . the country comes first."

I think this was more canny, though less sensible, than Mudd's melody: ". . . I really wouldn't think that was a very satisfactory speech . . . gone out on a limb . . . absence of explanation . . . Watergate cover-up . . . craven politicians . . . grant of immunity . . . not legally binding . . . proceed against the President in the courts of law." I'm not at all sure that people were ready, in terms of cerebral and emotional tuning, for this kind of thing. And anyway Mudd was out of key with the basic mood of all the television coverage at that time, which was to prove to the watching millions the respectability of the media, the boundless respect they had for the office of the Presidency. Anything conjuring up the image of a vindictive press had at all costs to be avoided.

The noise went on all night and then all the next day. It was, of course, interrupted by the news spectaculars of Nixon's final speech to the Imperial Guard and his departure for St. Helena. But all Friday we were still mainly on instant replay. NBC *Nightly News* actually reran all the week's newscasts, in one final orgy of electronic wallpapering.

In the face of this total electronic assault, the newspapers did as best they could, responding with tons and tons of newsprint and millions and millions of words. But at the Washington *Post* on resignation night (and I assume in many other newspaper offices) one had a feeling of restrained melancholy as the good ship Watergate, still burdened with good stories and sources and leaks as yet undisclosed, sank beneath the waves. Indeed all over Washington that evening and the next day those writers who had not yet returned to Martha's Vineyard and other points on the vacation circuit were facing drearily up to the tedium that comes after the crucible, the agony and the holocaust. As I left the building, the special memorial edition on Nixon, written months before, was roaring off the presses. There were fine articles by William Grieder and others. And upstairs William Grieder and others were straining away to add epitaph to epitaph to the normal Friday paper. "It's a bit like shitting," said one seasoned Washington *Post* scribe, referring to the speed of production and the quality of material that was being expelled in newsrooms all over the country.

There seemed to be some sense in his distasteful simile. There was the easy copious flow of the scene painters ("In the park some people milled about aimlessly and some sat on blankets, watching portable TV sets. Others stared silently and thoughtfully at a White House bathed in lights."—Washington *Post*); then there

The press spoke of trauma, congressmen were traumatized; the press spoke of emotion, congressmen cried

was the clogged, purple-faced expulsion of unpleasant matter by the analyst ("Yet in millions of minds it symbolizes the finest hour of American democracy."—Clifton Daniel in the New York *Times*). And so on and on and on.

The day after resignation the press once again bifurcated in the Nixonian manner noted at the start. On the one hand, there was a torrent of high-minded blather about the system working, the warm humanity of President Ford, the human warmth of Mrs. Ford and so forth. This was the press in its role as cheerleader, hard at work creating the myth of the Presidency, which it had spent the two previous years allegedly seeking to deflate. If you spend a large amount of words and pictures proclaiming the President is "human" and "affable" and a "good sport," you are creating a myth of the President just as surely as if you say that he is inhuman, unfriendly and a bad sport. Same myth, different clothing. I think experts in agitprop in the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China must regard with envy the sheer rapidity with which President Ford was created in the media. The process took about three days—culminating in the Ford covers on *Time* and *Newsweek*.

On the other hand, there was the attempt of the press to catch up with history. Resignation week, as I have suggested, was a week of headlines only. It was not until the following Monday, with accounts by Naughton and others in the New York *Times*, and teams at *Newsweek* and *Time*, that the substance of the week's proceedings began to emerge: Haig's role, Kissinger's role, the comings and goings between White House and Congress. Interesting though all these accounts were, one had a sense of deja vu even before one read them. Both the *Time* and *Newsweek* stories end on resounding cliches (*Time*: "For the country the worst of Watergate was finally over. There would be more trials, perhaps even startling revelations, but they would no longer taint the Oval Office. The renewal had begun." *Newsweek*: "There were moments of high achievement for Richard Nixon in his 2000 days; the real tragedy of his passing was that nothing so honored his presidency as his leaving of it."). Peering at these banalities, I had the feeling that all the writers involved had lost heart. This is not to say that their efforts were not prodigious. Between Wednesday and Sunday, the *Time* writers managed to produce the equivalent of a small book: instant history at its most professional. The *Newsweek* account of the last week was excellently done, too. But I wonder how many people bothered to wade their way through it all. Somehow the details of what happened and when lost out in the competition with the other theme promoted by *Time* and *Newsweek*, that Ford was a terrific guy, that the process of healing had begun and that America, Inc. was in pretty good shape. The fact of the matter is that the Watergate business really did end with Nixon's release of the June 23 tape.

There's the easy moral to draw, which is that truth will out through the untiring efforts of reporters in snap brim hats. But there is the other moral, too, that the press' real function, revealed in the final ecstasy-filled weeks of the Judiciary Committee and the first days of the Ford Presidency, is to glorify the system, proclaim that it works and that if any hitch appears in this system a tough judge and a couple of young newshounds can put it all to rights. That's the kind of good news story the public likes to hear. Worse than that, it is the kind of good news story the press likes to tell. We'll be hearing it for a long time. ●

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Today The Seed, tomorrow the world

By Eleanor Randolph

Former comic Art Barker says he will turn your drug-crazed kid into a dream teen. Others say his program, The Seed, practices the brainwashing of the future

For $250 Art Barker will turn your brooding, dope-smoking, average rotten teenager into a right-thinking American kid. Send him a 15-year-old Janis Joplin, the way a retired Army colonel did last October, and Barker, who operates out of Florida, will return a Karen Carpenter by mid-November. Claude Greene's boy was surly to the neighbors in St. Petersburg. He had long hair and a perpetually longer face. As one friend of the family put it, "Only drugs could make a kid that rude." Today, the elder Greene, a former city councilman, makes the tours of service club luncheons to beg support for Barker. His son is a dream teen. He smiles at the

ILLUSTRATIONS BY WILSON McLEAN

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man across the street. He takes out the garbage. He obeys his teachers and even his parents.

"The man is a savior," Greene once told the Optimist Club in St. Petersburg. "He saves kids' lives."

The Army colonel, a more practical man, is only a little less adoring: "No matter what you say about Barker, he changed my kid into somebody we can love. And who loves us, of course."

Arthur Robert Barker is a short, quick-tempered man who until four years ago made a scant living as a stand-in comic in Miami Beach. An ex-alcoholic who now lives in a $150,000 house and wears gold cuff links, Barker founded what started in 1970 as a drug prevention program called "The Seed." Since then The Seed has spread to three Florida cities where more than 5,000 teenagers have been sent for abusing drugs, sex, liquor and especially their parents. In the language of psychologists, most of whom are not allowed in any of The Seed centers unless they are ardent Seed supporters, Barker uses his own crude form of behavior modification. Opponents of The Seed put it more directly. They call it brainwashing.

Art Barker, who wears his bangs cut into a "V" that dips almost between his eyebrows, runs his controversial empire from behind a massive, curved desk in his Seed headquarters outside of Fort Lauderdale. He smokes constantly, sipping coffee between drags, and talks in a rapid New York accent about the evils of drugs.

The office is dark. His windows have been walled against gunshots he claims come from his enemies who are out there in two varieties beyond the 10-foot-high chain link fence, the guards and the high-intensity anti-crime lamps that surround his sprawling cement stronghold.

"They are all either druggies or they are fools," he once said of his critics. Later, he softened the view to include the growing percentage of Americans who suffer from mental illness. But Barker saves his special venom for psychiatrists like Dr. Raymond Killinger, who has been openly critical of his program.

Killinger, who works in Fort Lauderdale and has never been allowed into The Seed, says that he and his colleagues have treated "an increasing number" of young people who emerge from The Seed only to enter a psychiatric hospital. Some have nervous breakdowns. A few, says Killinger, have tried to commit suicide because of Barker's program.

"The man is a liar and a fool," Barker says of Killinger. He claims that "the psychiatrists can't do a damn thing with kids on drugs." Barker got his own degree in psychology from a Fort Lauderdale diploma mill that was closed in 1972 by the state.

So far the state has been pretty nice to Barker. Florida's Lieutenant Governor Tom Adams has endorsed him. U.S. Rep. Claude Pepper, a Democrat from Florida, chaired a committee that called The Seed "one of the most imaginative, innovative and dynamic programs designed to eliminate drug abuse by young people." Indeed, Barker's biggest fight with the state concerned his success rate. Barker claims that 90 percent of the youngsters who go into The Seed come out "cured." The state Office of Drug Abuse says it's closer to 41 percent, which is still far ahead of most drug programs. By Barker's recently published standards, successful Seedlings, as they are called, "become respected members of their community, discover that they can love themselves, love others, love family, love God and love their Country."

Ex-Seedling Patrick, an 18-year-old from St. Petersburg, loves himself, others, family, God and Country. But he is still a Seed failure. After two and a half months in The Seed, he does not love Art Barker.

Pat would not allow the use of his real name in telling his story about The Seed. His father works in Pinellas County, which includes St. Petersburg, and is afraid he would lose his job. There are many powerful people in southwest Florida who support Art Barker and The Seed. One of them, the father's employer, has a Seedling for a son.

As Pat told his story to St. Petersburg *Times* reporter Margaret Leonard, his term at The Seed began after neighbors told his parents he was on drugs. They visited Pat's parents one day and explained that their children, all Seedlings, had confessed to doing dope with Pat. As proof, they reminded his mother that Pat had posters on his bedroom wall. Definitely a "druggie" symbol, they said. Also his room was too dark. Light hurts druggie eyes.

Seedling parents have also explained to other parents that druggies listen to Alice Cooper and don't want to mow the lawn. If your kid owns a van you've got trouble, hundreds of unsuspecting parents have been told in Florida.

"People involved with The Seed literally convinced us he was on drugs," Pat's father says now. "We had no proof at all. The only thing we had was pure growing-up actions. He was kind of stinky."

Unlike many Seedlings, Pat went quietly to the center in Fort Lauderdale. Some youngsters have said they were enrolled by being locked in cars or surprised on their way home from school. One parent boasted to Eugene Patterson, editor of the St. Petersburg *Times*, that she woke her daughter up at 5 a.m. one morning after finding what appeared to be a marijuana cigarette in the family car. The girl screamed and clawed at the car windows for the four-hour drive to Fort Lauderdale. Undaunted, the mother enrolled the child anyway.

Juvenile judges in Pinellas County routinely sentence youngsters to The Seed. Barker and his staff often demand that parents sign a petition giving The Seed custody of their children. The petition says the youngster is incorrigible. It also makes it illegal for him to run away if he is under 17 years of age.

One judge, Circuit Judge Richard Miller, said he prefers juveniles to be absent from the courtroom while they are being committed. Usually, the youngster is not allowed to have a lawyer during this hearing, and he will probably find it even harder to get a lawyer once he is in the program. Asked recently whether a Seedling is allowed to telephone his attorney, Barker answered: "Why would they need a lawyer? They don't need a lawyer."

For Pat, his parents simply drove him to the Fort Lauderdale fortress where he was greeted by a young supervisor named Danny. Like the other young people who administer Barker's psychic medicine, Danny is a Seed graduate.

Nobody knows how to cure a druggie but a druggie, Danny told Pat and his parents that night to explain why Seedling graduates are in charge. And nobody knows how to recognize a druggie like an ex-druggie either, he added. Danny then stared into Pat's eyes, shook his hand and proclaimed he had just shaken the hand of a druggie.

As Pat tells it, his soft voice indignant but amazingly devoid of bitterness, he answered firmly that he did not take drugs. Danny smiled, then led him away from his parents to a long, open room where about 250 Seedlings sat on one side and about the same number of parents and visitors sat on the other.

Pat's first hours in The Seed were at one of the two public sessions a week where Seedlings confess their drug habits.

"I did everything from pot to heroin, uppers and downers, THC, STP and LSD. I was selfish. I hated my teachers," said a smiling girl, baring fresh, pink arms that had never seen a needle outside the local doctor's office.

Eleanor Randolph, formerly with the St. Petersburg Times, *is now a reporter for the Chicago* Tribune.

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Her parents sat across the room on hard-back chairs—cushioned against the long evening with football pillows brought from home. Her father clutched his wife's hand, unwittingly pressing a large teardrop diamond into her fleshy little finger. Her mother cried silently.

"Luvya, Mom and Dad," came the childlike voice of their daughter as her confession ended. "Luvya, everybody."

"Luvya, Gidget," the crowd roared as she sat down and handed the microphone to another Seedling who had almost exactly the same list of sins to confess.

When the mass catharsis ended and the guests were firmly out of earshot, Pat said that Danny took the microphone and introduced him.

"This is [Pat] from St. Petersburg, and he says he's never done drugs," Pat remembers.

The huge room, decorated at one end with a large American flag, echoed with smug laughter.

"We don't really believe him when he says he's not on drugs, do we?"

"Nooo," came the chorus.

"Let's tell him we love him anyway."

"Luvya, Pat," more than 200 voices obeyed.

As he sat in the front row that night, Pat suddenly realized what The Seed meant, and he didn't like it. The idea was probably a good one, he figured—peer pressure gets kids on drugs, then peer pressure can get them off drugs. But these Seed kids sitting behind him, smiling blankly at each other, looked like zombies.

The next day he found out why.

After being locked and guarded at another Seedling's house all night, Pat woke up the next morning to begin almost six weeks of daily appearances at The Seed—each session running from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

As he sat with about 50 other boys in one corner of the building, a Seed supervisor stood one boy up and then started tearing him down. Ugly, selfish, weak. He had acne or braces or a big Adam's apple. The supervisor and the group concentrated on that secret horror every 16-year-old tries desperately to hide from the girls, the friends and the school photographer.

At the other side of the room, Pat remembers a girl getting the same treatment from her fellow female Seedlings. It took about an hour. In that time, she kept insisting that she had never taken drugs. She was about 12 or 13 years old, Pat estimated, but nothing seemed to work. Too skinny, a whining voice. The girl listened and continued to protest that her past had been drug-free.

Then one of the older girls started talking about sex. "You aren't even old enough to know what to do with it," she said haughtily. The child started to shake.

"You probably couldn't even do it with a Coke bottle," the older girl shrieked, finally reducing her target to tears.

Later, the young girl confessed to using drugs and being selfish. When the confessions came, Seedlings would hold her hand, tell her she was loved by The Seed and ask her to rat on teachers, policemen or friends her age (potential Seedlings) who had taken drugs with her.

For Pat, even after two and a half months at The Seed, the pressure didn't work. They took away his weekly visits to church ("The only time you pray to God is when you're in trouble, and he never seems to answer you, so The Seed is your God," he says he was told). They took away his money. They timed his visits to the bathroom. They locked him in his room at night and watched him apprehensively during the day.

"Luvya, Mom and Dad," came the childlike voice of their daughter as her confession ended. "Luvya, Gidget," the crowd roared as she sat down

"While they weren't looking one night, I slipped out the back door and walked about 15 or 20 miles, saying the Lord's Prayer all the way. I didn't have a watch. It was maybe 3 a.m. when I came to this intersection. A cop came by and asked my name, and I said I was going to St. Pete to visit relatives," he recalls.

During the long, inevitable ride from the palm-lined highway to the Fort Lauderdale police station, Pat confessed to the policeman that he was from The Seed. "I started telling him what it was like, and he actually started sympathizing with me."

The sympathy ended when the policeman finally took him to the family that was keeping Pat that night. The adults explained that Pat was "heavy" on drugs. "They said I would be dead from drugs in a matter of weeks if I got out of The Seed," Pat says.

After that, Seed officials sent for his parents in order to begin one of the more extreme treatments for those who are slow to convert. While the entire staff watched, Pat's father obeyed the supervisors' orders. He tried to whip The Seed's credo of love into his teenage son.

A pinched look comes over Pat's face when he talks about the incident. He can remember fighting with his father and suddenly seeing blood on the man's lip. He can still see his mother standing in a crowd of smiling Seed teenagers. She was crying. Pat's father, who even now tells the story over involuntary tears, says that after the public beating he went to the nearest bathroom and vomited.

Later, Pat sneaked out again and spent the night in a bed of damp weeds near a rambling Florida trailer park. When it got light, he stood on the highway and hitchhiked back to St. Petersburg. At home, around noon, he found the front door unlocked and a note on the kitchen table from his mother, asking him to call her at work. When his parents arrived, Pat's father told him angrily that The Seed had called about his escape.

But this time the anger was not directed at Pat. His father said The Seed called, collect, to tell them to notify every police station on his route home to have Pat picked up as a runaway and a vagrant. They told Pat's parents to padlock the doors and refuse to let him in the house. Pat's father recalls that he was told to call the police and have his son arrested for trespassing as soon as he appeared on the front lawn.

"He flatly refused. He wouldn't do that even if he thought I was on heroin," Pat says of his father. "The last thing he wanted was for me to get busted."

Pat said his parents spent that afternoon and many evenings later talking about The Seed and Art Barker. "They know now that I wasn't on drugs. They know it wasn't right for me, although it may be a good idea for the hard-core druggies."

Pat's escape was more than a year ago. Since then he has graduated from high school, turned 18 and joined the U.S. Air Force. His former associates from The Seed are not allowed to speak to him. He is a failure, by their standards, and as a result he is generally considered by some Seedlings either to be on drugs or to have some kind of mental problem.

If Barker is correct in his estimates of The Seed's success, Pat is also in the very slim minority. Most of the youngsters in the program—whether they came in for drug use or other problems—come out the

way Barker wants them to come out.

The American Civil Liberties Union is one organization that is not happy about Barker's army of 5,000 anti-drug addicts. They are looking into the possibility of invasion of privacy—a youngster's private right to grow up in painful fits and starts.

The National Institute of Drug Abuse is also somewhat displeased with Barker. After the institute gave Barker more than $200,000 to run his program last year, they balked at putting another $700,000 into The Seed unless Barker opened his books and his doors to federal inspectors this year. Barker refused and issued a statement claiming that he doesn't need federal money or the "excessive demands, harassment and bureaucracy" that go with it.

But the ACLU and NIDA are also in the minority. Barker mainly gets laurels. For thousands of Florida parents, Art Barker is the man who took their broken-down kids and fixed them. He overhauled psyches and wrung out those painful mid-teen years when children start shouting back. The man who for years yearned to be loved by nightclub audiences finally has a following that thinks he is more than just funny. They think Art Barker is divine.

With that kind of backing, plus awards from such groups as the Freedoms Foundation of Valley Forge, Barker plans within a year or so to spread Seed outposts throughout the South, within a few years to foster Seedlings around the country and in 10 years to locate Seed branches around the world. As one St. Petersburg psychiatrist put it facetiously, after hearing the game plan, "If Barker goes according to schedule, The Seed should be in full command of the world's children sometime in the summer of 1984." ●

Rules of Thumb

By Joy Fielding

Hitching around town is not the best idea for women, but this plucky traveler's guidelines might just get you to the end of the ride

Before my three-year sojourn in Southern California, I always took great pride in my intelligence. Everyone used to say I was an exceptionally bright girl, but then, they didn't catch my act in Los Angeles. It's hard to keep your brains together in all that sunny weather. And when you live in L.A. and you don't own a car, you can either grow old and die while waiting for a bus, or you can throw caution to the wind and hitchhike. The dangers of hitchhiking are legion. Newspapers carry daily headlines about girls who have been raped or murdered, or both, while thumbing a ride. There are warnings everywhere—and almost everywhere, they are ignored. In Los Angeles, everybody hitchhikes.

After a few tentative efforts, it becomes easy. Pretty soon, you've staked out your own little corner and you stand with your thumb waving arrogantly in the air waiting for one of the passing cars to stop. One always does—especially if you're female.

Joy Fielding is both an actress and a writer who is now working on her second novel.

I thought I'd be safer than most because I'd only hitchhike in the daytime, usually during the rush hours when I assumed people were only interested in getting to and from work (like I was). I discovered that everyone was not like me.

This is when it becomes handy to know a few rules of the road. Mostly, you learn by experience, and every ride is an experience. You quickly become a veritable sidewalk psychologist, learning when to make conversation and when to be silent; when to say yes and when to say no; when to be innocent or knowing, and when to be just deaf, dumb and blind.

It helps to have a good sense of humor and nerves of steel. For example, it is not the easiest thing in the world to carry on a conversation with a man who is masturbating furiously in the seat beside you. But it can be done. Especially if you're in a great hurry to get where you have to go. I know because I did it. More than once.

One particular morning, I was late for work. I rushed to my corner (in front of what was then a strip club known as The Classic Cat) and stuck out my thumb. A car stopped immediately. My office was only a mile down the road, so I always rationalized that the limited distance made me safe. But a mile is still a mile, and a mile takes in a lot of inches, roadwise and otherwise. It was the otherwise that concerned me seconds after I climbed into the stranger's automobile.

It didn't take me long to realize that he had only one hand on the wheel. It took even less time to figure out where he had placed his other hand. Out of the corner of my eye, I noticed a lot of action in the area of his abdomen. That's really not fair, I said to myself. What was I supposed to do? If I got out of the car, I'd be really late for work. Besides, maybe a fuss was just the kind of response he wanted. I pretended not to notice.

With my hand placed firmly on the door handle in case he got tired of playing by himself and I had to make a sudden exit (not smart if the car is moving at the time), I held firm in my seat beside him, wondering what my mother would say if she could have seen me.

I kept up a steady stream of chatter so that he shouldn't think anything was amiss, occasionally glancing over in his direction, while never actually looking below his forehead. I talked about the weather, my job, my imaginary boyfriend who was a policeman.

The mile finally ended. He pulled to the curb; I jumped out. "Thank you very much for the ride," I called back. I decided not to stick around to shake hands.

You learn what to avoid. I eventually made it a practice to avoid any cars with bumper stickers or window slogans. At first, my boycott was limited to sentiments of a cruder nature. Signs like "Reagan eats it" and "There is no gravity; the earth sucks!" usually meant trouble. Then, I also learned to avoid cars whose banners carried political or social beliefs different from my own, this decision having been reached after a rather nasty argument with an ardent National Rifleman Association member. A word of advice: never argue with a National Rifleman Association member. They're very excitable.

I had to abandon religion as well a little while later. As usual, I was running slightly late, so when this car stopped, I hopped in, wondering only briefly if the "Honk if you Love Jesus" sticker on the front bumper was cause for concern. The man behind the wheel looked kindly. Slightly peculiar, but kindly. I thanked him for stopping, told him where I wanted to go and then decided not to risk further conversation.

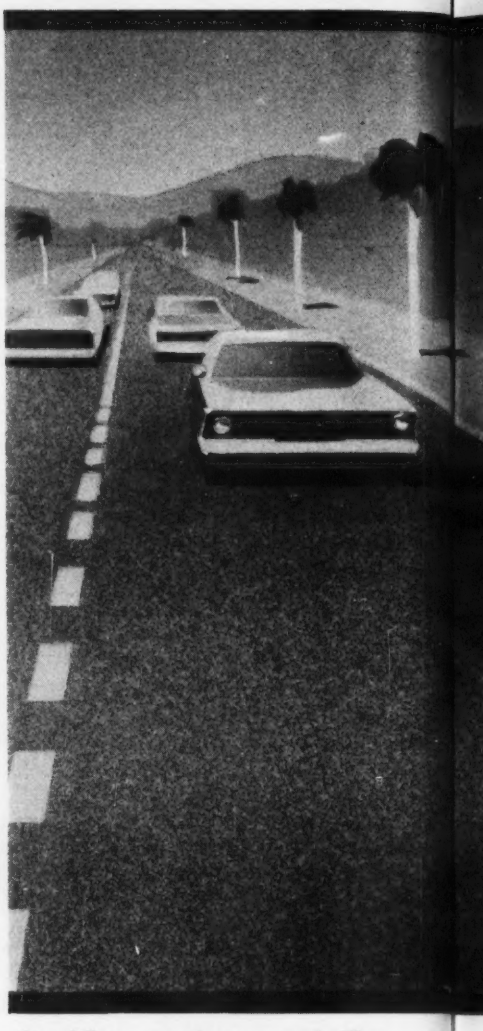
He looked over in my direction. Then he spoke. "You are a foolish girl," he intoned heavily. "A very foolish girl." I hadn't planned on asking why, but he decided to tell me anyway. "Don't you know how dangerous it is to hitchhike?" he asked, almost gleefully. "Don't you know the sort of men who just wait for stupid young girls like you? They wait until they see you with your thumbs sticking out—and everything else sticking out—and then they trap you in their cars and drive you out of the city, to a secluded lane, and then they tear off your disgusting, immodest clothes and ravage your young bodies, and then they strangle you, and mutilate you and do all manner of disgusting things to you!" I sat beside him, pretending I was Gloria Steinem and wondering what she would do in such a situation. "Just be thankful I am not one of those men. Thank God you are safe with me!" We reached my destination.

"Thank God," I muttered, getting out of the car.

"You're gonna burn," he yelled after me. "You're gonna burn!"

I always try to be polite. This courtesy springs as much from sudden shock as from diplomacy. When you've been surprised by something someone says or does and aren't sure quite what to say or do in return, it's best to be polite. This usually comes across as monumental dumbness on your part, which is as good a way as any of escaping from a sticky situation.

Take, for example, the man in the Cadillac. I made a point of sticking to the more expensive automobiles. I figured they'd represent a better clientele. Another fallacy, experience proved. The driver of this particular Cadillac was a perfect gentleman until the end of the ride. "I'll give you twenty dollars to French me," he ventured.



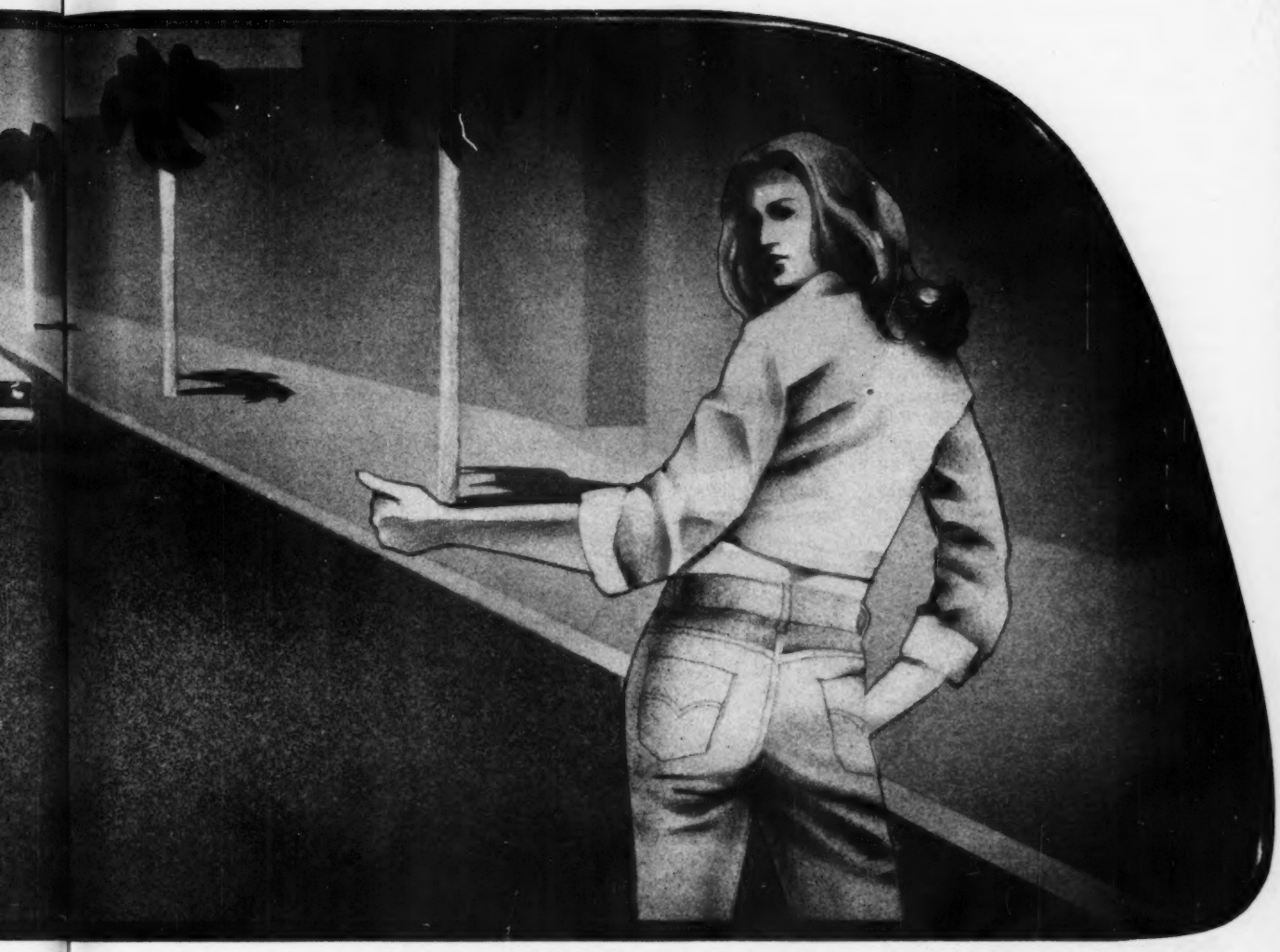
"I beg your pardon," I said sweetly.

He repeated his offer.

"I'm sorry," I said. "I'm not sure what you mean."

He explained. "Oh," I said, wondering what Dorothy Parker would have said. "No, no, I don't think so." I got out of the car. "But thank you very much for asking," I added and wobbled away.

Then there was the truck driver. Now, generally, it's a good idea to let trucks go by. There's something about being so high off the ground that adds to the pervasive "macho" feel in the cabs. They're risky, and uncomfortable besides. But I was tired after a hard day at work and wanted only to get home. I buried my fears and climbed up into the waiting truck. The driver, a man of about 40, said not a word all the way home. Then, as he braked the truck to a stop, he said, "Say,



do you know anywhere around here where I can get a good blow job?"

My eyes went bug-eyed with blankness. It was several seconds before I could find my voice. "A what?" I asked innocently, hoping I'd misunderstood.

"Oh, come on," he answered. "You know what I'm talking about." He repeated his request. That's something else I eventually learned—never ask anyone to repeat what they've said because they always will.

"No, I'm afraid I don't know where," I answered politely, crawling down out of the truck. "I'm terribly sorry. Maybe you could ask at the next corner." I shut the door. "Good luck," I said timidly.

Never accept a ride if the driver has pets in the car. I once spent the longest five minutes of my life in a Jaguar XKE with an overgrown Afghan named Sydney slobering on my shoulder from what's generously called the back seat. By the time I reached my office, I was covered in dog hairs, the makeup on the left side of my face had been licked clean and my left shoulder was soaking wet from Sydney's saliva. Not the sort of appearance that inspires raises in salary.

You've heard the maxim safety in numbers. It's not to be trusted. I once accepted a ride with a young man who had already picked up two other girls. They sat beside him in the front seat. I climbed in the back. After several blocks, he stopped to let them out, inviting me to join him in the front seat. I agreed and opened the back door. As I did so, one of the girls leaned toward me and whispered, "I wouldn't if I were you—he's exposing himself!" Now, the smart thing would have been to get out of the car immediately, but I wasn't in the mood to be inconvenienced. "I think I'll stay in the back seat," I told him. And did.

Women drivers are a good risk, but then they rarely stop, and when they do, you're very uncomfortable throughout the ride trying to figure out why they did.

And finally, you can make hitchhiking fun.

My mother decided to visit me for several weeks and the whole world of Los Angeles was new to her. So was hitchhiking, which she opposed. But after waiting for a bus on a bench provided by Forest Lawn Cemeteries for more than half an hour, she became a convert.

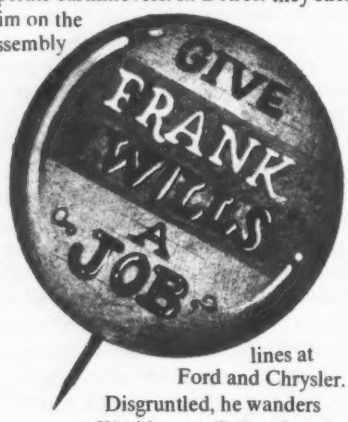
She remained on the bench while I ventured to the curb. Within seconds, a car pulled up and I hopped in beside the driver. My mother got up from her bench, walked quickly to the car, opened the back door and climbed in. The young man looked questioningly to the back seat. My mother smiled. He looked at me. "I don't know who she is," I shrugged, turning to look straight ahead. My mother was too stunned to protest. So was the driver. He drove me right where I wanted to go, my mother firmly ensconced in the back seat. That was years ago and my mother is still talking about it.

Now that I'm safely out of L.A., and driving my own car, I never stop for hitchhikers. After all, you never know what sort of person you're liable to pick up. ●

side trips

The selling of Frank Wills

Washington, D.C.—It begins like a parable. A skinny black kid, who grows up hunting crabs on the beaches of Savannah, heads north for the Job Corps and a new life. In Battle Creek they teach him to cook and operate earthmovers. In Detroit they stick him on the assembly



lines at Ford and Chrysler.

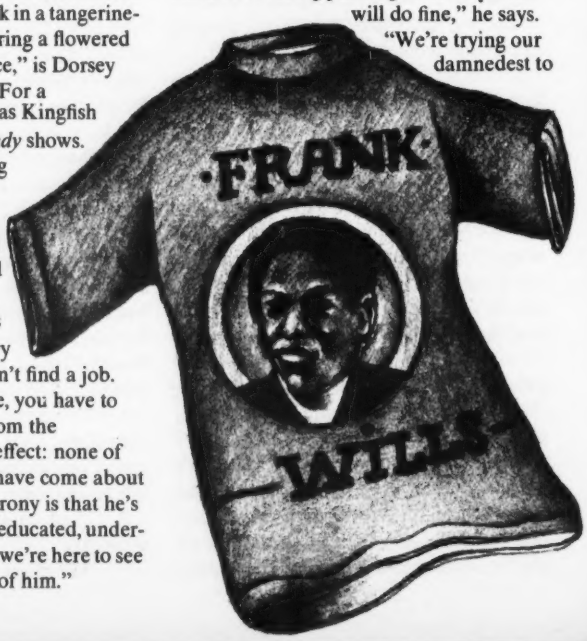
Disgruntled, he wanders to Washington, D.C., where he hears things are better.

They're not. For $2.05 an hour, Frank Wills gets a can of mace , a uniform and the night watch in the basement of the Watergate complex. Late one June evening in 1972, while the moon hangs cloudless on the Potomac, he finds a piece of adhesive tape across the latch of an outside door and decides to call the police. The next day, when it is all over the papers, the man in the White House hurls an ashtray across the room. . . .

But if the story reads like *Pilgrim's Progress* so far, what follows needs a new title. Like maybe *The Greenbacking of the Backward Boy*. The scenario changes, too. It's 1974 now, four days after the President's resignation, and Frank Wills, 26, jobless since June, sits quietly in an office high above Connecticut Avenue. A few feet away, rocked back in a tangerine-colored swivel chair, wearing a flowered shirt and a straw "skypiece," is Dorsey Evans, counselor-at-law. For a second, you'd swear it was Kingfish from the old *Amos 'n' Andy* shows.

"We're representing Frank," says Evans, "because he's a footnote to American history—and we intend to be the period right behind it. People still don't appreciate this boy. He saved our country from anarchy—and he can't find a job. Metaphysically, of course, you have to understand Watergate from the standpoint of cause and effect: none of what's happened would have come about without Frank. And the irony is that he's *under*-everything—undereducated, underfinanced, underloved. So we're here to see nobody takes advantage of him."

By now, counsel—who is in his 40s and has just moved into a mansion in Chevy Chase—is out from behind his desk and burrowing into a large box. He extracts a couple of T-shirts printed with his client's picture, campaign-sized buttons, even a four-color booklet that recounts the details of the fateful night. Before he hands a copy of this last over for inspection, the attorney allows with an embarrassed little grin that he wouldn't mind recovering printing costs. "A dollar will do fine," he says. "We're trying our damnedest to



FRANK WILLS

market Frank Wills, but there doesn't seem to be a market. I've sent this stuff all over the country and personally called up every distributor in the D.C. yellow pages. At first, I thought it was a case of out-and-out discrimination. After all, Frank stands for the minority who embarrassed the nation. Then I began to think we couldn't sell him because the Administration had its clamps on Watergate. But about that time along comes Woodward and Bernstein with their million-dollar book and movie deal and I say to myself, 'Well, Dorsey, what the hell is it?'

"They're moving that damn bookdownstairs like hotcakes. Frank and I even got an invitation to come to a reception for it —which, of course, we threw away. I asked Bernstein myself why they didn't put something in the book about Frank so's he could get a little remunera tion, too. Bernstein says: 'What do you want?' I says: 'Whatever we can get—five dollars or five million.' "

The lawyer's voice is racing by this time, his arms pumping as steadily in and out from the flowered shirt as pistons. When you ask if all this isn't a little like hyping Davy Crockett underwear or Linda Lovelace candy bars, the pistons jerk to a stop, the voice winds down and a hurt "no" blows across the room like a sandwich wrapper. The interview is over. But before you get up to leave, there is one more matter: "You know, we feel that anybody who spends a few hours talk ing to Frank ought to be willing to pay a fee— would your magazine have anything like that?" And then: "We're only doing all this so Frank can decide what he wants out of life. . . ."

Frank Wills seems to be having a hard time deciding much of anything these days. You sit alone with him in his one-room apartment on 13th Street, where the blinds are drawn by mid-afternoon and the garbage hasn't been taken out for awhile, and you begin to get a sense of the darkness he wanders in just now. Here, at least, time seems to lay at his feet like a worn-out hounddog.

"I don't know what it is," he begins softly, a trace of Georgia accent still in his voice. His cat, Tot, sits on his lap; Gladys Knight moans from a stereo; a color TV, with the sound off, is tuned to a game show.

"I've had four security jobs in two years. I quit the Watergate after the break-in because all they'd give me was a sergeant's stripe and a 50-cent raise—before taxes. I got fired from another job for gettin' too much publicity and takin' time off to give talks. The Capitol Hill police were 'bout to hire me—till they found out who I was and that I hadn't finished school.

"For over a year I didn't work at all. I've been ready a buncha times to go back to my mama who's in South Carolina. But then I always think, 'What's a grown man gonna do back home?'

Pretty soon I'll have to draw unemployment. The rent on this place is $160.

"I had no idea what that piece of tape was gonna lead me into. How'd I know it had anything to do with the President of the United States? I was only doin' my job when I called the police. Why should I have all this bad luck ever since? Shoot, when my mama first heard about it, she figgered I was involved. Now she says, 'Son, just keep on pushin'.' "

A lot of people are pushing. There was the preacher from Chattanooga a while back who kept at it until Wills consented to fly down for a speech; the honorarium check bounced. On August 15, in Philadelphia, the security guard received the Martin Luther King Award from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organization that has all but dried up and blown away like milkweed. At the last moment, the awards banquet, which also honored actress Cecily Tyson, had to be switched from the downtown Sheraton to a black Baptist church in West Philadelphia because only 16 people bought advance tickets. (Three hundred eventually showed.) Wills said, at the presentation, that certain of his friends in Washington are pushing him to run for City Council; it was the first anyone had heard of it. Though there have been other trips recently—to California as the guest of honor at a disc jockey convention, to New York for a *Wide World of Entertainment* segment on ABC—none of it has yet brought him a job. But in darker moments, Wills admits he's not sure he's ready to go back to work.

"Things are kinda messed up now. That's why Dorsey is handlin' matters. He's okay, I guess. I know one thing: from the time I left the South to the night I found the tape, the Universal Architect has had it all planned out for me. That's why I don't have any hate in my heart. I'm just a regular person tryin' to find happiness. I still think a lot about goin' back home, maybe gettin' a little farm, cookin' collard greens and cornbread, raisin' some kids. That'd be nice."

Two Thursdays ago, while hippies hooted and tourists from Council Bluffs clutched flags and hung on the White House gates in prayer, Frank Wills was up in Philadelphia buying a few records. He left town on the night of resignation because he was sure the papers would be after him for statements. He also didn't want any part of the street carnival he knew would be running at full tilt in the last moments of Mr. Nixon's presidency. That, as it turned out, was the better part of valor. For when a sobbing Wanda Chang from Hawaii came up and poked you in the ribs, demanding to know if "you sad?" it was hard to think of a nice way to say no.

"I can't believe our President resign," Wanda choked. "You think I make him some fried won ton, he get it? I wish I know who start this whole mess. It so sad."—**By Paul Hendrickson**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANDREW RHODES

Muhammad goes to the mountain

In which the "People's Champ" lets us know that he knows there's more to life than Boxing and Money

By Jesse Kornbluth

The interviews are gang rapes now. Film crews are here from as far away as Japan. The sportswriters wearily take it down in shorthand. Go-getters from obscure Southern wire services are rapping with any black around. Magazine flacks aim their Sony TC-55s and mostly hustle one another for drinks at the motel bar. It's a real media orgy, this Ali training camp in Nowheresville, Deer Lake, Pennsylvania, important only because it is here that Muhammad has established his mountaintop retreat, the first gym-and-bunkhouse compound ever owned by a fighter. There are actually boxers here, it's a legit operation on many levels, but mostly the camp is overrun with palefaces. Palefaces asking white questions, of course, because that's the way it has to be—there's so much money, so much white money, on the line in the September 24th slugfest between Ali, the "People's Champ," and reigning titleholder George Foreman that the story has to be shaped and hustled and promoted and these, we know, are the special skills of the white news network.

This network is needed because basically there's no story here, not one, anyway, that would be of much interest to white American audiences. The Third World is something that rips us off at the gas station, Black Muslims are well-dressed but nonetheless threatening dudes who make you uneasy with that damned *Muhammad Speaks* they're always shoving in your face at street corners. No, if the Ali-Foreman story is just going to be about Race and Religion, forget the millions of dollars this fight can make, forget the shot in the arm this championship bout will give to boxing, forget gigundo grosses from the documentary movies of the fight, the training camps and that three-day black music festival in Zaire, forget that possible total of $100 million in revenues—all of it generated by a couple of nearly naked black men trying to punch one another silly in a 19-foot ring at 3 a.m. in Kinshasa, Zaire, a short 1,200 miles from the famine that is the very model of 1970s-style apocalypse. Play all that down, brother, if you want to help the cause, the cause being Boxing and Money. Consider the fight only, please, the way sometime gangster-turned-promoter Don King would have it: "the most supercolossal event in the history of the world."

Which it will be, if you talk about Money and Boxing as the main issue, because if you can only narrow your focus to that information, Don King isn't jiving when he calls this "the biggest numbers game of all time." With these fighters and that "jungle" location—which just happens to be 25 miles from a satellite relay station—and this ultra-heavy white promotion, the Ali-Foreman fight has got to be the single hottest commercial moment in the history of the globe. "A billion people are going to see this fight," says Murray Goodman, boxing's top P.R. man, as he flogs the grand dimensions of the event. "And that's a modest estimate."

One billion souls. A quarter of the world simultaneously tuned in to one place: the heaviest concentration of human attention ever. The biggest purse, the hugest paycheck of all time: each fighter's been guaranteed $5 million. If, by a fluke, it lasts a full 15 rounds, that's still $300,000 a round per man. $100,000 a minute if it goes all the way. Not bad for a night's work, even by rock and roll standards.

The hitch is that it's going to cost around $20 to see it in an American movie theater, $50 a head if you want to see Gladys Knight and have dinner at a New Jersey casino along with the fisticuffs. Ringside goes for $250, but you can't get a ticket unless you shell out $2,700 and spend a full week in Zaire, taking in the music festival (James Brown, Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin, etc.) and the sights of Citizen Mobutu's wondercountry on the Equator.

But screw the paltry 150,000 witnesses to the actual event; they're not holding it at three in the morning just so it'll be cool in the stadium. The world's the thing here (3 a.m. translates into 10 p.m., New York time) and megahype's the August song at the training camps. Screw those 16 African Presidents sitting ringside, the hell with the event's "implications," we've got a fight to promote here, got to make sure we don't blow the $15 million white dollars that have been advanced to get the thing off the ground; please, you writers, give us the story about Boxing and Money getting it on and screw Marshall McLuhan while you're at it, wait until at least October before you come on with that line about Muhammad Ali as a prophet disguising himself as a boxer.

So the reporters gather each morning in front of Aunt Coretta's Kitchen, a large building made of oversized Lincoln

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER SIMON

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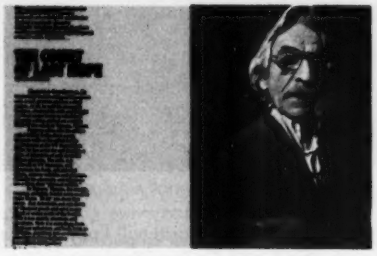

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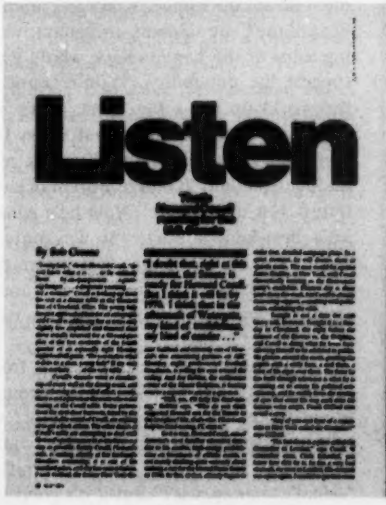
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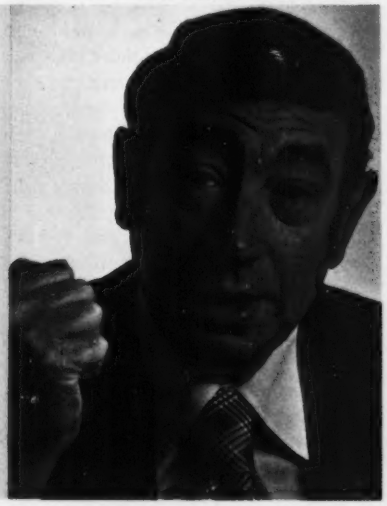

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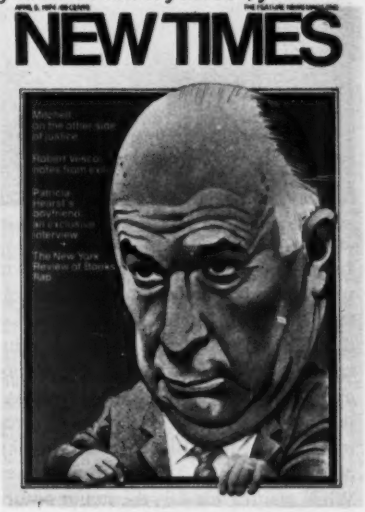
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Ali's retreat is landscaped with symbolic rocks bearing the great names of boxing.

Logs which serves as the camp's living room, mess hall and communications center. Under the August sun, they bemoan the dullness of George Foreman, who's training too far away to visit, thank God, and they bless the editor who assigned them to Ali, even if they have been forced to stand out here like chickens, inhaling dust and all but passing out from the heat. While waiting for Ali—the major occupational chore—they stare out over the valley, over Highway 61 and the traffic below, and they talk, when they break the almost-southern, near-Faulknerian silence, of Boxing and Money until Ali finally comes out and then they cluster around him, turn on tape recorders and cameras and ask him only about Money and Boxing.

"What's your weight now, Muhammad?" they ask. And: "What round will Foreman go in?" And: "Will this be your last fight?" And: "Any problems you anticipate having to fight at 3 a.m.?"

Muhammad Ali leans against one of the huge rocks he's had trucked in from all over, the rocks he's picked for their symbolic qualities and painted with the names of the great fighters, rocks so big it took 15 men to set some of them just so. Muhammad Ali stands there, his mind very far away, but he answers the questions, he does his famous Muhammad Ali impersonation: put the listener on, put himself on and finally get interested enough in the put-on to make a standard speech sound entrancing and even spontaneous.

"I'm at 220 now," says Ali. "I'll be 212 fight night, and remember, I've still got a month of training to go and I'm in better shape than I've been going into some of my fights. Age hasn't slowed me down, it's made me smarter, faster. George Foreman's slow, he's been fighting bums. I'm the dancing master, and I predict a great upset, a miracle will be performed. . . ."

Seen Ali's way, it's a kind of epic, about the greatest fighter there ever was, and how a government-sports conspiracy fucked him over because he wouldn't kill gooks, it's about being out of boxing completely in his peak years, about losing to Frazier and Norton, about coming back and whipping them both. And now there's only one man left to whup, that nobody, George Foreman, the man who has knocked out Norton and Frazier—both in the second round!—but who never came up against the King of Kings, the People's Champion, the dancing master himself. It's age and experience against youth and blind strength, it's Ali and his infinite wisdom against this overrated schmuck. Damn right the world is going to be "shocked" come September 24th—this is going to be a boss smoker, a genuine "rumble in the jungle," and when it is over, this: "The world will know that I am the king, and George Foreman will bow and the critics are gonna crawl."

You'd never guess he's been doing this act every day for the last two months; it comes out in a gush, as if he's an idiot savant with only one perfect sense—how to manipulate media. You want ranting? He's already there, forcing his face into grotesque poses, voice strident, arms waving while the photographers go click-click and he pretends to be so lost in the moment he doesn't notice. "George Foreman beatin' me?" he screams, indignant, waving a fist at the hapless flack who'd even suggest the possibility. "You're buildin' the world up for a big upset, that's all, press and critics talkin' about when I'm gonna go. I'm the king and I'll never go!" Suddenly sullen: "George Foreman's the tramp. I'm the champ." Now he's America's best-known poet: "It was only a nightmare, only a dream/ But it tortured me all through the night/ Six women fought to make love to me/ And the ugly one carried the fight."

What do you need from him, from his infinitely deep trick bag of promotional quotes? "I'm paid to be an idiot," he tells a newspaper photographer who wants a shot of him doing the Ali Shuffle. "What's your excuse?" But if it's good for the zillion dollar gross—and he knows it is, because what news has made its tortured

way out of the Foreman camp recently?—he'll oblige. Shuffles in the dusty yard. "And don't you want one of the Ghetto Whopper, that's the punch I learned from Kid Gavilan?" Why not; click-click. He'll never complain when they ask for a re-run, slightly different angle this time, please, champ. Absolutely. With a menancing snarl for all the folks out there in Medialand. And though it looks, from that far distance, as if they've been sucking his blood, from closer range, it's clear he's feeding off them.

But isn't it just a little insane, with all this air being pushed around, that nobody asks one question about Race and Religion? The reporters won't even throw him the same sucker questions about politics and the economy they willingly give to any brain-damaged movie star with nothing on his mind. No, day after day it's Boxing and Money and Comeback. When the simplest fact of it is, a month before the greatest single commercial moment ever, the fight, the money and George Foreman have almost nothing to do with what is happening inside Muhammad Ali.

Which isn't to say that Muhammad Ali is uninterested in the boxing aspect of the fight: he gets up at five every morning to run and spars a long hour in the afternoons, going two or three rounds each with a succession of fighters. It's just that in the process of getting battered by his sparring partners, letting them hit his body so his insides will be toughened, this is the first reason Ali gives for his inevitable victory in Zaire: "the power of Allah, who controls everything. I believe I'm in good standing with him."

Ali is your bet, he wants you to know, because he will be the only Muslim in that African ring. "I don't eat pork," he says. "I don't think like porkeaters. I'm not an ordinary what you call Negro."

To say the least. In a profession where mugs and sharpies vie for momentary prominence, Muhammad Ali is the first—and probably the last—genuine prophet. If you subscribe to the camp reasoning, his victory's in the bag because, as even Bundini Brown says: "God set it up this way. This is the closing of the book. It started with a monster and it's closing with a big monster."

And this is from Bundini Brown, mind you, no great religious hero himself: in fact, the sort of man who, as a friend says, has spent his life trying to be "a marketable pimp," a man whose hobby is selling interviews and who comes across best as a badass actor, which he was, and convincingly, in *Shaft*. Bundini Brown, of whom it has been cheerfully said: "He would take the dimes off a dead man's eyes and put nickels back." The same Bundini Brown who will, without asking for reward, lead the serious seekers to Ali, saying agreeably, "If everybody knew Jesus when he was around, they'd be snappin' his picture and gettin' his autograph, too."

That's the way everybody talks about Ali on his mountain—the two acres are officially named "Fighter's Heaven" but it's "Muhammad's Mountain" to the insiders—and after all the hype that's been laid on about Boxing and Money, there's a real inclination not to take this praise for Muhammad seriously. Just the usual efforts by the camp sycophants to curry favor with the champ, hoping he'll read the puffery that finds its way into the media.

So why is Bob Goodman about to cry? We're standing out in the dust, and Bob is talking about money and the fight, trying to keep the conversation on the event—which is his job, after all; he's Murray Goodman's son and the P.R. man here at the camp—and that is starting to bore. "What do you think Ali will do when he retires?" Goodman is asked, and although it's a question put to him at least once a day, this time it gets all the way through. "I don't know what he'll do," Goodman says, gulping. "I've been with him 10 years, I've practically lived with the guy," and they're forming on his lids now, big tears at noon. "Obviously he's a great man, and whatever he decides to do"—a tear now cruises down Bob's round cheek—"God bless him."

Between prayers, Ali gets down to some basic training.

Meaning Allah, of course, because Ali is a Muslim and the camp is, without much statement of the fact, a place where boxing isn't the only thing happening and maybe it isn't even the main thing. Muhammad was the first convert to Elijah Muhammad's tribe here, and only his immediate family has followed him, but it's inescapable: the camp is a kind of psychic suburb of Mecca, a showcase for Islam where, if you will, boxing becomes a visual metaphor for a proud and healthy black lifestyle.

Ali acknowledges Elijah Muhammad as his master, but for all practical purposes, it's Ali who represents the American Muslim movement, who is its most visible believer and articulate spokesman. "I pray five times a day," he says, as the visitor's gaze settles on the volumes of Arabic theology he keeps by his bed. "I pray in the morning, at noon, three, at six and when I go to bed. I pray in a couple special spots but mostly I just bow my head." When he sees that the visitor is actually interested in his religious habits, Ali opens up, gains enthusiasm for the topic with a fervor he doesn't give to the boxing monologues. "Man, I was in Libya, they pray so much, they're so strict. Last murder in Libya was 42 years ago. That's 'cause they build mosques like we build factories. You can hear 'em chanting all day. I go over there—whew!—I get a good feeling."

That's why anyone can hang out with Ali, why the camp is always open. As a demonstration center for his faith, it's got to be that way, without regard for Ali's personal protection. Let other people worry that a sickie might show up with a piece and off the champ; Ali says, "Elijah Muhammad is fearless. Allah, his God, protects him. And we who follow him are fearless. Ain't no guards, anybody can pull a gun. Nobody's watching—nobody but Allah. There are no other world figures you can name you can walk up on like this. Nobody. You walk in my kitchen, walk in my gym. 'Hey champ,' no guards, nobody sayin'. 'Who are you?' "

Alright, champ, the big one: who will you be, what will you do after this fight?

First answer (half-serious): "I don't know that I'll fight again, unless I have some divine reason to keep going. But if I have to, it's worth another couple of years and $20 million." Here in his cabin, where there's no electricity and the kerosene light casts romantic shadows on

The prophet entertains inside his meditation cabin: "You'd never know he's been doing this act every day for six months."

the logs, that talk of money is offensive, even if it's all for Allah's benefit. "When I quit boxing," Muhammad Ali says slowly and seriously, "I will work with black people who have problems. I'll preach the Islamic religion, convert more Muslims. We need to recruit people and teach them the knowledge and history of themselves. This is going to be a big role for me." He pauses and sighs even though this isn't a movie and that would be the only correct stage direction. "Because in the ghettos," he says, "nothing has changed."

Prophet. That's how they sometimes speak of him around the camp. And, yes, that's what he is, as absurd as it sounds on the surface for a heavyweight fighter, a man who makes his living with his fists. Prophet, they say, and in a rush, it all starts to make sense. Certainly there's great good humor around the camp, without benefit of alcohol, drugs, liquor, cigarettes, sugar or swearing. Certainly there are parallels here to that other Muhammad (570-632), the founder of the faith, who organized his religious group as an ongoing political unit, a permanent association of blood brothers.

Prophet. Not because he has proclaimed himself. And not because he rules the camp, although he does. Prophet because he sets himself up as an example and tries to be worthy of the love that is showered upon him. Because he has that rare ability to know what everyone around him is thinking and will alter the group mind—telepathically, it sometimes seems—without appearing to. Prophet because he's taken a boxing camp and turned it into an ashram, a holy place, because he's taken a career and turned it into a cause larger than self. Prophet because he never stops happening, because there's always something to watch.

"The prophet Muhammad," it is written, "always walked as if he was rushing downhill, and others had difficulty keeping up with him."

An event. In Hazelton. Muhammad is coming off his mountain.

Yes, he's coming off the mountain, sports fans, and what's more, he's going to personally drive his big new bus, the $100,000 monster he calls "Foolin' Around," for a full hour on twisting minor highways to come to this grim town and give an exhibition for charity. Which charity? Nobody knows: Ali's given his word, said he'd show up and box six rounds, and right away, the sponsors added some amateur "championships" to sweeten the evening, and as a result, we finally learn—much later—some very non-soul Hazelton orchestra will be jetting to Rumania, of all places, where they will definitely give those distant peasants a very odd impression of American contemporary music. Courtesy of Muhammad Ali.

What's doubly bizarre about this benefit is that Ali's been telling everyone he won't come off the mountain. Daily the charity calls come in and somebody, usually Gene Kilroy, has to fend them off: no, sorry, Muhammad is in training, no he won't go to Boston, not even for Ted Kennedy, if you want to help him out, come to Deer Lake. But a contractor friend of Muhammad's has begged him—the man did install a $3,000 water pump and well up at the camp gratis, although Ali could easily have paid—and there will be an enthusiastic crowd of kids who'd otherwise never get to see him fight, so here we are in Hazelton. The self-proclaimed greatest fighter of all time and his best sparring partners: Ali has given them the day off before their "annihilation" while keeping himself on a program of early morning roadwork and six roads of afternoon workout.

Charming: the sparring partners have to change in the same room, and they are just a trifle bored with the trickle of admirers who slip past the cops, just a bit comatose from Ali's standard pre-fight verbiage. Mo-man Williams, looking like a refugee from *Sounder* in his uniform of overalls and T-shirt, actually yawns. And Larry Holmes and Bossman Jones ex-

change weary looks. "Keep talkin'," Bossman mutters. "Wear yourself out, Muhammad." "Yes, these are Army boots," Ali says. "But I didn't have to join to get 'em." And: "If the policemen took off their pistols, I could whup all of them."

Perhaps. But he does not whup his sparring partners. In fact, unless he is just jiving, he has lost most of the rounds on points. Ultimately, he dances out of tight situations, but when he shouts, "Do you want me to get him?" and the crowd screams approval, he can't. So, to take the fans' minds off boxing, Muhammad Ali, stand-up comedian, grabs the mike and describes what he'll do after destroying George Foreman. "I'll go into the powder room," he says, so secure in his masculinity he can mince like a queen, "I put on my tuxedo, I've got my little pimp walk . . . see, I'm a playboy. I don't want to prove I

. . . meanwhile, back in Zaire

By Joel Stratte-McClure

One thing is certain. It will be like no heavyweight championship fight ever before. Zaire's all-powerful, often whimsical president, Mobutu Sese Seko, is seeing to that.

If Andy Warhol's oft-quoted observation that we are entering an age when everyone will be famous for 15 minutes holds true for nations, then September 25 was ordained to be Zaire's moment in the sun. Quite simply, Mobutu is hoping to parlay the fight into a political triumph, one which will leave his large, mineral-rich nation unmistakably preeminent in black Africa. It is an expectation that has not been lost on other African leaders, most notably Nigeria's General Gowon, who vied with Mobutu for the fight.

Mobutu's version of the Africa to come is not a complicated one. Every evening, before Zaire television programming begins, a map of the continent appears on the screen, with Southern Africa (which includes Rhodesia and South Africa) set off in white. Within moments, to the accompaniment of martial music, bayonets descend from the top of the screen and the entire continent turns black. Finally, Mobutu himself turns up, in voice-over, exhorting his people to join him in tossing the whites into the sea.

Black pride is the hallmark of the 10-year-old Mobutu regime, understandably so in a nation that, as the Belgian Congo, endured a century of white rule.

The most obvious manifestation of cultural pride in Zaire is Mobutu's program of "authenticité," designed to shake the nation loose from all vestiges of white rule.

"L'authenticité" has had an impact on every segment of life in Zaire. Citizens have been urged to drop their Christian names, men are forbidden to wear ties and women are no longer permitted to wear wigs, and everyone is now addressed as "Citoyen"—Citizen—regardless of status or age.

One odd byproduct of the "authenticité" program is the fact that Muhammad Ali, elsewhere an underdog, has been pegged a heavy favorite by Zairois. Local newspapers gave heavy play to the fact that he, too, had changed his name, and the citoyens and citoyennes have taken him to their bosom. Things have gone so far that the government is afraid that if he loses, widespread rioting might erupt. Consequently, there has recently been a campaign in the press to build up George Foreman for the sake of balance.

The Mobutu regime has been trying to set the proper stage for the fight in a number of other ways. Although the capital of Kinshasa—formerly Leopoldville—is relatively modern by African standards, it was by no means equipped for a spectacle of this magnitude. But newly built training facilities for the fighters are excellent, new plumbing has been installed in the 100,000-seat "20 Mai" soccer stadium, a huge canopy has been erected to shield the ring in case of rain and new buses have been purchased to facilitate transportation to the event.

Still and all, gargantuan problems remain. The local newspaper, *Solango*, has boasted that 30,000 Americans will fly over for the fight. In fact, only 5,000 foreigners are expected in Kinshasa fight week, but even that number will cause major difficulties.

For starters, the airport has trouble dealing with more than one flight at a time. Incoming tourists must produce visas, vaccination certificates, travelers checks and sign a variety of declarations. If Mobutu happens to be at the airport, which he frequently is, entertaining some foreign dignitary or other, flights are required to circle overhead until the various national anthems have been played the requisite number of times. A recent farewell to President Bongo of Gabon was clocked at almost an hour.

Then there's the problem of accommodations. There will probably be just enough beds for all the tourists—but four-fifths of them will be in dormitory rooms at the University of Kinshasa. Hotel prices will be out of sight.

In fact, the entire economy of the country is being bent out of shape. Inflation is already running rampant—a pizza at the Intercontinental goes for five dollars—and with tourists likely to snap up ivory statuettes, crocodile briefcases and tribal masks as if there were no tomorrow, it should shoot even higher. The tourist boom is also going to encourage bribery of petty officials, who move more quickly with a few bucks in their pockets, and further stimulate the thriving black market. Officially, two dollars buys one zaire, but one zaire can be had for $1.40 illegally.

The most serious problem for the Zairois government, as it goes about the business of showcasing the nation, is crime. Wives of American diplomats, who reside in comfortable suburbs, travel in groups with armed guards when they come to Kinshasa to do their shopping. Every apartment building has night watchmen, but they often let thieves into homes in exchange for a portion of the stolen loot. Other thieves pretend to be cops. They politely ask visitors for their passports, demand to see travelers checks and then take the money and run. It's a ridiculous ploy but a ridiculous number of people fall for it.

The current fad among Zairois bandits is to stone cars traveling the roads late at night from trees which branch out over the street. When the drivers stop their damaged cars, they are assaulted. During a recent visit to a Goodyear Tire plant, I saw three employees with head bandages—the result of attacks after leaving a party the previous weekend.

The prospect of thieves killing or maiming foreign visitors haunts the Mobutu regime, and in June the President announced that as a warning he was hanging 45 Zairois in jail for theft. Still, for all the government's ferocity, no one expects anything but an orgy of pickpocketing and theft around fight-time.

But crime or no crime, inflation or no inflation, there appears to be no way Mobutu's dream will go unrealized. On September 25, when Howard Cosell and the rest of the sports fans, and James Brown and the other entertainers, start heading home and the casinos go back to servicing the usual crowd of diplomats and jaded journalists, Zaire will, for the first time, be on everyone's map. ●

can take a punch, I just want my money, go to the bank, still intelligent. Look at me entertaining you—most boxers can't even talk! I mean, I'm the kind of fighter who turns down professorships at Oxford University!" A boff response, but Ali's reserved the killer until the laughter crests: "Have you ever heard of a fighter turning down a professorship at Oxford? A *colored* fighter?"

There is silence on the bus trip back. Everyone is exhausted. Up front, the champ drives, has trouble with the gears, gets the bus back to Deer Lake without benefit of insults or advice. Silence as he pulls off the highway, one in the morning.

The Lincoln-log camp is really Ali's ashram, his holy place.

Silence as trainers and boxers file off the bus, not saying goodnight. Silence because Muhammad Ali is still sitting in the driver's cockpit, his body limp, his face expressionless, his lips alone moving wordlessly, his head turned slightly toward the East. Silence.

Bernard Cushmeer, author of *This Is The One: Messenger Elijah Muhammad*, is standing in the dust outside Aunt Coretta's Kitchen and talking about Malcolm X. He knew Malcolm, sat at Elijah's feet with him to get the teachings and watched Malcolm take some 20 confused Muslim brothers away from Elijah and into evil— like into death. Brother Cushmeer is an engaging conversationalist and pleasant-voiced, but there is nothing nostalgic he feels for Malcolm and he sounds as if it would not matter much if it turned out that it was Elijah's honchos and not the CIA who wasted Malcolm.

Minister Cushmeer loves Muhammad Ali, but the way he speaks of him, Ali is a follower, wise primarily because he's recognized the Honorable Elijah Muhammad as his master. He's interested, but not affected by the stories of Muhammad Ali's goodness—of his visits to hospitals, where he swears to afflicted children they can do the Ali Shuffle if they try hard enough.and of blitz-tours of old-age homes, where he challenges 100-year-old dudes to fights and they love it, holding up wrinkled fists to answer him. Nice, humanitarian, but not to the point. And it is less to the point to suggest that Ali's involvement with the Muslims, like Malcolm's, might be just one stage of an ongoing spiritual quest—that far from following Elijah forever, Ali might subsume him, contain him, he might even surpass him.

A question forms itself, but it cannot be asked: what, Minister Cushmeer, will happen if your Muslim brother decides to pack it in? Does Muhammad Ali then get the full Malcolm X treatment, sprawling lifeless on some gymnasium floor? Or, if Muhammad Ali moves on, will Elijah Muhammad take a punch?

Fortunately, August's question is: can the prophet box? Two hundred people are packed into the gym to find out this afternoon, hoping that the man of peace is also a man of destiny. They applaud his entrance, his rope-skipping, the quick grunts as he moves in toward the full-length mirror. Muhammad Ali is there, and yet not there; as Minister Cushmeer has said, "His mind is on boxing and not on boxing." No response as Bundini Brown rubs Albolene Cream into his gut. No recognition as he takes the headgear from Blood and steps into the ring.

Right off, Roy Williams, the Pennsylvania state heavyweight champ, is on him, punching like George Foreman, but scarier in grizzly beard and headgear. Advance, move forward, don't let up: that's the Williams-Foreman approach, and he punches hard, right hand flashing every few seconds, hitting Ali often, the punches sounding like a fast ball connecting with a beanbag. Ali seems surprised by the ferocity of the attack. Wasn't this supposed to be sparring? It isn't. A minute into the first round and they are brawling like street-fighters.

Muhammad Ali is on the ropes again, and Roy Williams is hitting him. Jabs to the face. Rights to the body. He connects with everything he throws. Until Ali just pushes him and suddenly Williams is back in the center of the ring. Comes out slugging. But Round 1 is over.

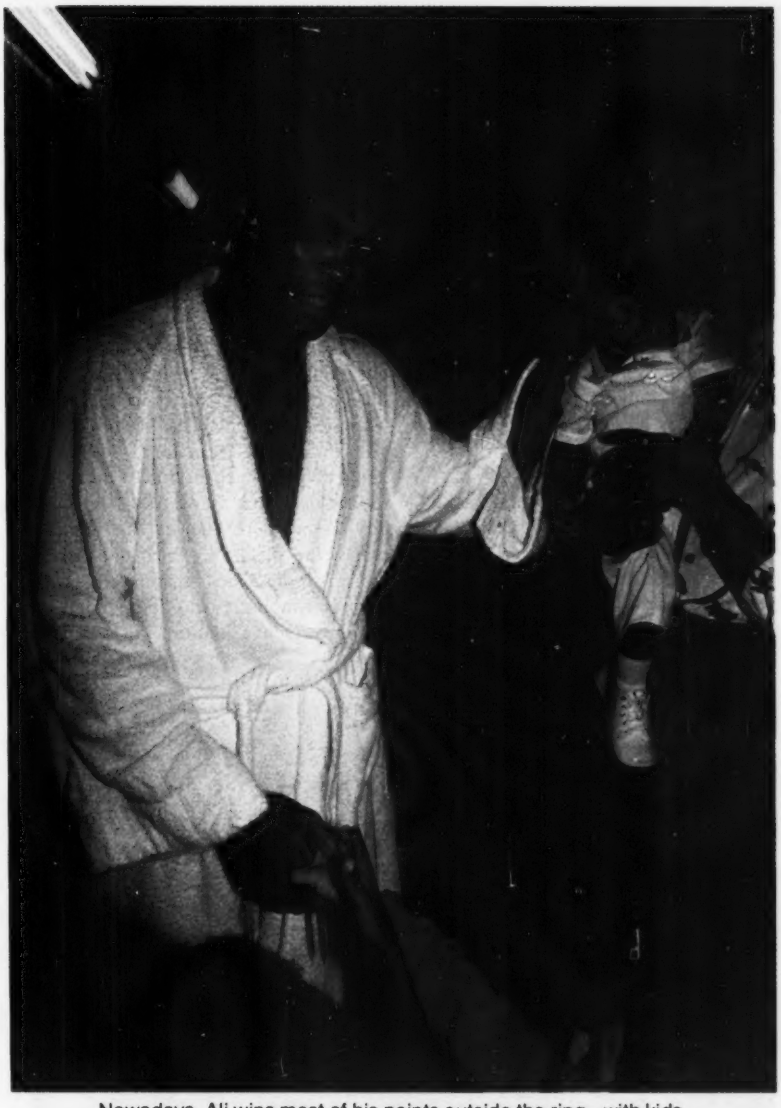
Round 2: Ali hangs onto Williams. The whole time. A restless crowd—what if George Foreman's spys are watching? Or somebody from Jimmy the Greek's shop in Vegas?

Everyone sighs as Ali comes dancing out for Round 3, holding his arms wide, inviting Williams to reach in. Williams throws a punch, Ali does the shuffle and it's a whole other match now, the champ is in control and 200 people are on their feet, shouting for a knockout, although this is only a training camp and both fighters are wearing so much protection that's clearly impossible.

Jab, Muhammad, they shout, and Ali starts jabbing, sneering as he moves, the white of his mouth guard making him look more sinister than he ever has. A left. Two. Three. Williams' head snaps back. Dance, Muhammad, they shout, and Muhammad is dancing. Half a step forward, a full step back, dropping in a jab going forward, a few more as he retreats. Dance! Dance! they shout but he doesn't notice their encouragement, he's too busy working out that side step, turning his body as he punches so those left jabs—which look so puny when you don't know what you're watching—land as if they were rights.

Williams blinks, unleashes his right, fights Ali off, and as the room rocks with bloodlust, they stand toe to toe in the center of the ring, brawling. The bell rings, relief drains everyone—the fighters, the trainers, the witnesses—and if Jimmy the Greek's man is going to the phone, the odds have got to be tipping toward Ali.

Unfortunately, Mac Foster, "Dynamite Mac" as his calling card announces, is next, and he knows Ali, has lost



Nowadays, Ali wins most of his points outside the ring—with kids.

to him a year ago in 15 rounds. Muhammad is cautious around Foster; he not only looks dangerous, with his hair slicked back like Bo Diddley, he can do a little dance himself, a modified bob-and-weave complete with a deceptive head shake that takes the opponent's eye away from the punch he's delivering. And right off, he corners Ali. Gets him on the ropes. Lands 10 body punches in a row. The gym becomes a morgue.

The last round: Ali comes out dancing again, dangerous now—but not more dangerous than Foster. There's whispered anxiety again, September's not that far away—but now Ali is stalking Foster, is dancing forward. "Come on, you bastard," a man shouts, "get him." Ali takes a huge breath, takes another step in the right direction.

"Dance, champ," Bundini calls out, clapping his hands. "Close the show."

Blood looks down at the stopwatch. "One minute."

Muhammad Ali is looking for an opening and not finding one.

"Thirty seconds."

Muhammad Ali is dancing out the clock.

"Close the show!" Bundini shouts again. "Close it, champ!"

Mac Foster is moving forward. Muhammad Ali is moving back.

The bell rings.

Training is a seven-day week, an endless cycle of days that are Xeroxes of the one before. Training is a chore when you've done it as often as Ali; you do everything you can to keep it light. Today there's the promise of some fun in the morning's 6 a.m. run, it's going to be an event, this wretched effort to lose weight on the roller-coaster back roads. Special fun, too, because there's a 13-year-old kid in camp, a beautiful and intelligent black boy. Ali has all but adopted him and vice-versa, and conscientiously the kid has set his alarm clock early so he can wake the champ and run with him.

Gene Kilroy snores a few extra minutes today, stumbling out to the station wagon as Ali dances out of the gym, the boy a few steps behind. Smiles, because there's an early morning show, more interesting than the usual sight of the champ's butt from the station wagon; today the morning movie is about a man in combat boots running with a kid in regulation high-top sneakers, and it's especially poignant because it's not a Pat O'Brien-Bing Crosby *Boys' Town* scenario. Here the boy is doing Muhammad Ali a favor. Running with the old man of the mountain. Something one-year-old Muhammad may never get to do.

Slap, slap, slap: the champ's boots on the highway are dull echoes to Kilroy as he follows the runners, making sure some dismal drunk doesn't get famous for the wrong reason. Slip-slap, slip-slap: the champ breaks his stride to let the boy catch up. The kid is breathing hard, the run is tiring him, but he is proud—so proud—to be running with Muhammad and he is determined not to let the champ know he's already beat.

Muhammad knows. But he pretends not to notice, even lengthens his stride to show there's no favoritism. He stares off, blank, maybe remembering himself at that age, already boasting he'd be the greatest fighter there ever was, a skinny kid just starting to prove he was the King. Now, he's at the end of that cycle, running hard just to stay in place and wise enough not to want the same for his children, but better, and more. Maybe he's thinking about the camp, and the business of the day, or maybe, at long last, he's free from the necessity of thought altogether because he suddenly pours it on and the kid has to go all out to catch up.

The mountain rises ahead. Now they're at the drive-in, where Bruce Lee's last kung fu film's been thrilling the locals. The boy pants audibly. His lashes are frosted with sweat. Muhammad slows as he approaches the car so the race will end up a sure tie. Gene Kilroy pulls further ahead, giving the boy plenty of time to break the imaginary tape with Ali.

Slap, slap, slap. They're both striding now. The boy stumbles, Ali slows, looks lovingly down at him as the kid recovers, pulls even. Two boys running on a black highway. Two kids who think it's the greatest goof in the world to run off some of the excess charge before everybody wakes up and groans about the fact of another day. Two kids, one dead heat.●

MOVIES

Not a great deal

By Frank Rich

Robert Altman's **California Split** is a second-best effort by a first-rate director—which, in this case, is another way of saying that this new and unsatisfying comedy about gambling is often a good deal more fascinating than the triumphs of lesser artists. There's nothing unseemly or disastrous about the picture, and it in no way resembles *Images*, Altman's one out-and-out mishap, an obsessional psychodrama that bears little or no relation to the rest of his career. Indeed, for the most part, *California Split* positively abounds with the trademarks of its creator: the overlapping dialogue, the nonlinear narrative, the heightened concern with atmosphere and, of course, the unpremeditated and sometimes hilarious jokes that affirm the outrageous and cruel paradoxes of American life. The movie's overriding thematic preoccupation—which is put across by its two heroes' efforts to survive in a lonely American landscape polluted by unfathomable social absurdities and the stench of spiritual rot—is of a piece with the director's previous projects. The personal battles that other Altman protagonists (whether comic or tragic or both) have fought out in the Depression-era South (*Thieves Like Us*), the 19th-century western frontier (*McCabe and Mrs. Miller*), the sterile Houston Astrodome (*Brewster McCloud*), the smoggy L.A. of the 1970s (*The Long Goodbye*) or the casualty-ridden precincts of a U.S. medical base in Korea (*M*A*S*H*) are here carried out in the seedy, smoky gambling dens of California and Nevada. Regardless of historical or geographic differences, the metaphorical distance between the settings of all these movies is nil; as Altman presents these ostensibly varied locales, they even look alike. In this respect and others, no one could ever mistake *California Split* for the work of another moviemaker; at the same time, I don't believe anyone could rightfully equate the impact of this picture with that of either of Altman's last two films— namely, *The Long Goodbye*, which was the best American movie I saw in 1973, or *Thieves*, which is the best American movie I have yet seen in 1974.

In *California Split* Altman confronts material that fails to yield the measures of depth and feeling (as well as the quotient of laughs) that characterize those other movies, but, to his credit, neither does he attempt to bolster this material by resorting to cheap or desperate gimmickry. *California Split* has no sloppy moments and lacks that hacked-over look which betrays pictures that have been rebuilt in the cutting room; its pace is smoother than that of many a funnier comedy. You don't come out of the theater feeling that the director has lost control of himself or his talent—you just feel disappointed that you haven't had a better time. As far as I'm concerned, the only real error Altman may have made in this instance is to tackle this particular property in the first place. That's hardly a piddling mistake, but it won't stop you from relaxing in the movie's presence and appreciating those sporadic outbursts of humor and insight that do, every once in a while, turn up.

I guess it would be easy to blame the film's failings on Joseph Walsh, the author of the screenplay, and yet, in the past, Altman has rewritten screenplays or altered them extensively through improvisation to get what he wants. What matters is that the director and scenarist collectively have not succeeded at getting a handle on their two heroes, Bill Denny (George Segal) and Charlie Waters (Elliott Gould), compulsive gamblers who meet by chance as the movie begins and become fast friends thereafter. While we learn (or at least see) much about the self-destructiveness and rootlessness that permeate this duo's day-to-day activities at the gaming tables, the picture's principal observation about these men—that they live with a fear of winning, even a desire to fail—is an uninstructive platitude that defines the characters' predicament rather than elucidates it. Worse, the possibilities for surprise in the world the protagonists inhabit are numbingly limited, even though that world is one defined by a never-ending rush of high-risk bets. Bill and Charlie, after all, are into a routine; win or lose, they're destined to end up as lost as they are when we first encounter them. The special nature of their gambling compulsion effectively closes off the avenues of willful courage that have been open to such past Altman heroes as private eye Philip Marlowe, entrepreneur McCabe or erstwhile birdman Brewster. However true to life Bill and

Gould and Segal in Altman's *California Split*: inconsequential tensions.

Charlie may be, the range of their behavior is too narrow to give the film the emotional texture that is necessary to command our involvement.

Like the relationships of McCabe and Mrs. Miller or the Gould-Sutherland surgeons of *M*A*S*H*, Bill and Charlie's is casual and noncommittal. Gambling is virtually all they have in common. Segal's Bill is a magazine editor with debts, an estranged wife somewhere and eyes that are surrounded by despair-inflicted fissures, while Gould's Charlie seems to have no personal or professional attachments of any kind to worry about. Charlie is a big talker, as buoyant and raunchy as Bill is introspective and middle class. Most of the time the two men are together they just joke and carry on, either by downing booze or recounting past stratagems or heading off to the track or the card tables to test their luck once more. Only when drunken reverie or transitory victory lead them to manic expressions of joy do they break through each other's evasive exteriors, but even under such expansive, clowning-around conditions, their mutual isolation is always apparent. As they stumble giddily through a darkened parking lot, singing and dancing like long-lost pals, they're not necessarily in sync or even warbling the same song. The steps they perform in the moonlight are not part of a subconsciously coordinated choreographic design: Gould twirls around like a gawky human top and Segal, a few feet away, swoops his arms back and forth like an ape schooled in vaudeville. When, at one point, Charlie returns from an impulsive trip to Tijuana that had been inspired by a sleep-induced vision, a hurt Bill confronts his friend to find out why he wasn't asked along. "You weren't in the dream" is Charlie's only explanation.

Though the ties that bind these men together are at best fragile, there's no reason that the tenuousness of their friendship could not be the basis for a good movie. What separates the gamblers of *California Split* from Altman's previous semi-detached couples (whether male-male or male-female) is that with them there's never even the expectation that they might help each other out of their shared morass. As a result, any tensions that develop between Bill and Charlie appear inconsequential in the long run; it's difficult to care about the ins and outs of their relationship when we're absolutely certain it will prove meaningless in the end. (This was emphatically not the case in *McCabe*, where one could entertain the real hope—brilliantly confounded by the director—that Warren Beatty and Julie Christie might band together to ward off both psychological and literal destruction by the apocalyptic climax.) Bill and Charlie are so faithful to type that they often seem pale figures when stacked against the minor Altman characters that hang around the edges of the film—a difficulty that is complicated further by the stars' performances. Much in the manner of the private eye hero he played in *Goodbye*, Gould-as-Charlie offers a running commentary on just about everything that happens around or to him whenever he's on screen. Perhaps because of this constant repartee, perhaps because of the incredible chemistry that continues to operate between this star and the director, Gould's performance dominates the proceedings from the word go, until finally he comes close to wiping Segal off the screen. Given Segal's gifts as a comic actor, this is no mean achievement, to say the least; still, delightful as Gould is, the imbalance doesn't help the movie any. One feels that his advantage is more a function of his natural magnetism when placed in the centrifugal ambiance of an Altman work than an intended ploy by the film's creators to shed additional light on their leading characters. Far too often the picture's Brueghel-like background, with its panorama of lucidly defined extras, swallows up the heroes.

This ambiance is, as always, extraordinary, and Altman continues to achieve it by demanding that we divide our attention between a number of characters, events and conversations, all of which may appear simultaneously in a single shot. When this director takes you into a crowded room, it's hard not to believe that the actors have been there for hours, playing out an exposition that has been discarded in the final product. People are presented in verbal midstream without any explanation of who they are—we either read them right off or we don't—and the result is a better aesthetic equivalent to actual human interaction than mere naturalism could ever render. Among the subsidiary denizens of the environment detailed in *California Split* are a goodly number of memorable personages, including a literally bare-assed female saloon customer who walks around unnoticed by the rest of the clientele, a bitter race-track loser who throws oranges at Segal and Gould and an abandoned drunk lady who laces her denouncement of her husband with salty diatribes against "faggots" and her pet dog's prolific discharge of excrement. The movie's wildest as well as one of its more touching figures is a dowdy, soft-spoken, middle-aged transvestite (Bert Remsen, gangster T-Dub of *Thieves*), who may or may not go by the name of Helen Gurley Brown and whose idea of an elegant night on the town is to go to Chasen's wearing a nondescript, charwoman-style dress that she's "had made in Omaha" and has never heretofore "had the balls to wear." And yet Altman need not work exclusively with freaks to spin the magic: when Bill and Charlie have a large stuffed dog delivered to some women friends, the man who brings it turns the moments that pass between the receipt of his tip and his departure into a recognizable spell of inexplicable, even touching, awkwardness.

The women friends who receive that dog are the two untheatrical hookers whose modest L.A. house serves as Charlie's most steady crash pad. Almost all of the movie's undisputable high points take place at their home, a faceless dwelling that offers no clues to the personality of its occupants. Barbara (Ann Prentiss), who, in one of the movie's several Altmanesque coincidences, shares her first name with a wide variety of other characters, is the older of the women and the more practical. She's a trifle motherly in that she'll advise a friend to have "roughage" in a meal even as she serves a breakfast composed of Froot Loops and beer. Her main form of pleasure is lying in bed and reading "the guide" (by which she means *TV Guide*), and, if she can't put her hands on the magazine right away, she doesn't think twice about interrupting any of her cohabitants' sleep or lovemaking to search for it on or under a bed. Barbara's keen devotion to "the guide" does not, as far as the movie lets on, extend to her actually sitting down and watching television; her life plays itself out apart from that mainstream America where causes inevitably have their effects.

Her younger companion, Susan (Gwen Welles), with her auburn hair, earnest eyes and flat verbal gestures, may strike Altman devotees as the latest incarnation of a long line of naive heroines in his pictures—heroines who, in the past, have usually been played by Shelley Duvall. Welles is an easily acceptable substitute for the other actress, for she, too, is at once spaced-out and real, appealing and faintly disturbing. Like the frontier whore Duvall played in *McCabe*, Susan has a predilection for falling in love with strange men—an occupational hazard that she would be far better off without.

When we first meet her, streaks of mascara are running down her delicate, almost palpably soft face; her date of the evening has upset her by rewarding her with $20 *more* than the price agreed upon. After she meets Bill, she develops a tentative affection for him as well, although nothing can ever come of it—she's just too lazy to reach out and grab what she wants.

Toward the conclusion of the picture, Bill stops by the house one night to find Charlie and meets up with Susan instead. Charlie has been gone for awhile and Susan doesn't know where he is; perhaps, until Bill asks her, it has never even occurred to her that her sometime housemate has been away. Soon Susan changes the subject, offering to make love to Bill gratis because she "really really" likes him "a whole lot," but Barbara chooses that moment to return home, and, quite unmaliciously, walks into the bedroom to retrieve "the guide." The flash of understanding between the two would-be lovers is over as soon as it began, and Bill, having been given a cue to concede another defeat, slips out while the two women search for the magazine. "He didn't really like me, not really," Susan says to console herself after she realizes that she's alone once more. Barbara immediately distracts her by describing the "young" and "good-looking" date who will take her to Hawaii the next day. "Do you think I'll like him?" Susan asks, as Barbara holds her in a comforting embrace. "I think you'll love him," her friend answers unconvincingly. "OK." says Susan in a colorless voice, all the while staring into the blankest of space. It's just one of several fabulous moments in a frustrating movie that never attains the magnificence of some of its parts and usually reflects the emotional listlessness of the sum of them.

Escape to Nowhere, which marks the debut of French director Claude Pinoteau, is a pluperfect example of that special breed of European film which people tend to describe as "intelligent entertainment," as in "intelligent love story" or "intelligent sex comedy" or, in this case, "intelligent thriller." Such movies tend to be stylishly made contrivances, inoffensive to the eyes or ears; they are often assembled by virgin directors who broke their teeth in apprenticeship to prestigious, established filmmakers (Max Ophuls and Rénè Clément, among others, in Pinoteau's case), and they often feature stars with serious international reputations. Like *The Serpent* and *The Inheritor*, to name just two other and somewhat similar French movies of the past 12 months, *Escape to Nowhere* can certainly be classified as "intelligent"—in that it is not stupid. This picture may even be moderately thrilling, too, if, upon entering the theater, you're willing to empty your brain of the remnants of every other counterespionage melodrama you've ever seen or read. But sometimes I wonder if audiences or critics would take trivia like *Escape to Nowhere* seriously were these pictures not booked into "art" movie houses and equipped with top-rank actors like Lino Ventura. Given the choice, I'd rather stay home and read the new John le Carré novel.

Pinoteau's film is essentially a one-character picture, that character being a middle-aged, French-born physicist (Ventura) who has too long been a pawn much manipulated by both the communist and NATO powers. Now he sees an opening by which he can seize his freedom, and, for once, take charge of his own existence—but to accomplish this end he must duck the murderous jousts of a wide assortment of clandestine agents and hit-men. Since the hero can trust no one, he has to be a pretty cagey fellow to survive, and cagey he is, if not to the extent of ever adopting a physical disguise that might at least temporarily throw his pursuers off the trail. Ventura, an actor of tremendous sensitivity with an expressive face to match, does make you care about this man without a country from time to time, although those who saw him do a proletarian version of the same type of outcast in Claude Lelouch's *Happy New Year* last winter conceivably may care a little less on this occasion.

What most works against Ventura, though, is *Escape's* half-hearted screenplay. The picture starts badly, playing out 35 minutes of pure (and predictable) exposition, most of which is executed in a routine visual style that adds a sense of inevitability to the entire exercise. Thrills do not precisely abound as Ventura escapes to nowhere by foot, car and train—mainly because each of these episodes recalls movies we've seen before, particularly Hitchcock movies. (*Escape's* climax is, in part, an unambitious reworking of the Royal Albert Hall finale of the Master's 1956 *The Man Who Knew Too Much.*) While Pinoteau is not a hack, no one could accuse him of pushing himself to exhaustion in this first effort. He's not above creating a primitive and apparently arbitrary continuity by cutting from spinning car tires to those of a plane or from the ring of a house bell to the chimes of Big Ben; in the last 10 minutes he cuts so relentlessly and rhythmically between his concluding chase scenes that I imagine you could close your eyes and still have a rough idea of what's going on at any given point.

For what it's worth, Lea Massari, the young mother of Louis Malle's *Murmur of the Heart*, turns up about halfway through the film, to do a cameo as a woman the hero once left behind. Her reunion with Ventura, set in a modest restaurant, is a sentimental set piece, complete with a hint of tears and looks of deep regret and sorrow exchanged in ominous silence. Sure, maybe this lovely actress can be accused of lusting after a fast paycheck, but how ingenious to do so by appearing in a movie that no one would dare call trashy, even if it's almost always dull.

When Sam Peckinpah makes a movie called **Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia**, you can bet that by the time that movie is over someone is going to bring someone else the head of Alfredo Garcia. The bearer of Al's head, it turns out, is none other than the ubiquitous Warren Oates, playing a Bogartesque piano bartender in Mexico City; the recipient is an aristocratic Mexican father who hates Al for having knocked up his daughter and who has placed a ransom on his would-be son-in-law's hide. Suffice it to say that by the time said head reaches its destination, 16 people are dead—and the best bloodshed is still to come.

Alfredo Garcia is the work of a talented filmmaker who has grown more and more childish with time. As Peckinpah's movies become lazier, even the controversiality and offensiveness of his machismo-fixation lose their edge: what was effectively and frighteningly fascist in *Straw Dogs* seems tired and banal in this picture. *Alfredo Garcia's* screenplay (the handiwork of the director and Gordon T. Dawson) is probably too attenuated to alarm the defenders of cinematic decency, and even Peckinpah's technical prowess, still apparent here, should fail to rouse most audiences out of a stupor.

The most effective incidents of the movie do, in fact, involve violence, though the *Wild Bunch*-style, mass, mow-'em-down machine-gun massacres have about one-tenth the impact they once did. My favorite bits include one in

which a couple of characters scramble around and in dear old Al's grave and others in which various interlopers attempt to relieve Oates of his prized possession. Not one to hesitate about repeating the heavy-handed moral lessons of the past, Peckinpah occasionally takes time out to show us little kids as they observe the cruel shenanigans of their elders. Unfortunately, he does not revive the warm approach he brought to the central characters of *Junior Bonner* and *The Ballad of Cable Hogue*, the latter being the picture I still consider to be this moviemaker's best.

Peckinpah's view of women—need I say it?—continues to be atrocious: the heroine (played by Isela Vega, a chanteuse-actress of some renown and questionable skill at either singing or speaking) is an almost simpering romanticist who would like to marry Oates "in a church" and yet wouldn't entirely mind being raped by a motorcyclist (Kris Kristofferson, in a quickie appearance) who intrudes on the two lovers one afternoon. The picture's two principal cold-blooded killers—played by Gig Young and Robert Webber—are apparently meant to be taken as gay, so rest assured that they get what's coming to them by the final fade-out. Meanwhile, Oates, like all Peckinpah heroes, becomes mangier and mangier as the movie progresses, if never quite as mangy as the sack in which he carries Garcia's head. Thanks to its blood stains and entourage of buzzing flies, that omnipresent parcel upstages the hero in almost every scene.

BOOKS

Hanging in there

By Geoffrey Wolff

How to Stay Alive in the Woods *by Bradford Angier.* Collier Books (285 pp., 95¢).
Staying Alive *by Maurice and Maralyn Bailey.* McKay (192 pp., $6.95).
A History of Polar Exploration *by David Mountfield.* The Dial Press (208 pp., $14.95).
Alive: The Story of the Andes Survivors *by Piers Paul Read.* Lippincott (352 pp., $10).
The Ungodly: A Novel of the Donner Party *by Richard Rhodes.* Charterhouse (371 pp., $8.95).
Survive the Savage Sea *by Dougal Robertson.* Praeger (269 pp., $7.95).

Stay-at-homes like to cock an ear to those who have returned alive from across the frontier. The storytelling business was built upon such odd and extreme situations as make you gape and shake in your boots, as magnify man in his own regard, as provoke—to be fancy about the thing—your pity and terror. Othello would woo Desdemona with adventure yarns:

Wherein I spake of most disastrous chances,
Of moving accidents by flood and field,
Of hair-breadth scapes i' the imminent deadly breach. . . .

Othello's were war stories, most of them, and till recently battle has spurred most of those extreme deeds that we civilians long to hear retailed. In our time heroes may still be certified by war, certainly, and men still test themselves by letting themselves be shot at. But such heroism as is shown by a war correspondent is singular and personal, sometimes even pathological, nothing to catch the popular fancy. Because the new hero is typically caught by surprise in his test. He is an ordinary fellow, not eager to suffer, modest in manner and stature. He is one whom we like to believe is available to our own mirrors, not one before whom we shrink. He is a survivor, not a conqueror.

Such a hero stirs tidal responses in our time because he flies in the face of all we have been taught by such anthropologists as Konrad Lorenz and Robert Ardrey, by such fiction as *Lord of the Flies.* These instructors, fortified by reason, have taught us that for his fitness to survive man has been genetically marked by Cain's own brand, that the strong breathe life into themselves by sucking it from their weaker brothers. In our time it takes a hero to give the lie to such a notion.

Dougal Robertson, his friend, his wife, his three sons, were adrift 37 days in a rubber raft after their schooner was sunk by killer whales near the Galapagos Islands. Before they were rescued by a Japanese fishing boat near the coast of Central America they sucked the spines of fish, drank the blood of turtles and fortified one another with saltwater enemas. Maurice and Maralyn Bailey, whose sailboat was also sunk by a whale near the Galapagos nine months later, in the spring of 1973, were adrift 117 days, also in a small rubber raft. They ate the eyeballs of fish and rancid organs from many living things, and reverted, by their own account, to life in the cave. Neither the Robertsons nor the Baileys thought to eat one another.

Even the soldier Othello turned from war for his mightiest topper. He'd piled on the terror and gore, and then . . . and then . . . he told of "the cannibals that each other eat,/ The Anthropophagi, and men whose heads/ Do grow beneath their shoulders." The ghoul, and one special kind of hero of self-salvation, are men set apart. Shakespeare knew the issue was a wowser, a final haul on the crank. In *Antony and Cleopatra*, when Antony has slipped into luxurious self-gratification, Octavius Caesar, a sober citizen, a man for our time, torments him with a reminder of the grand and strange man Antony once was:

Thou didst drink
The stale of horses, and the gilded puddle
Which beasts would cough at. Thy palate then did deign
The roughest berry on the rudest hedge;
Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsed. On the Alps,
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
Which some did die to look on. . . .

Richard Rhodes's novel about the legendary Donner Party, caught by miscalculation in the High Sierras through a miserable winter, short of food, reduced from 89 people in the autumn of 1846 to 47 the following spring, is a prolonged meditation on the most extreme use man can make of man. Strange flesh indeed, and *The Ungodly* labors with great elo-

quence to explain how it happened that the party come to relieve the survivors discovered "a young woman's body with the limbs sawed off and an ax slash across the head. An old woman missing a leg, a saw lying beside the body in the snow. The bodies of babies with the livers and lights drawn out."

Alive, Pier Paul Read's history of 16 Uruguayan rugby players and their friends who survived an original party of 45 that crashed in the Andes in 1972, tells of shock and pain and ingenuity, of near starvation for 71 days in minus 40 degree weather and awful winds. As in *The Ungodly*, a couple of heroes fought their way out of the mountains to save themselves and send rescue to their fellows. One of the relief team, Lucero, "glanced at the fragments of human bodies which lay scattered over the snow and said, 'Have condors been eating the bodies?' 'No.' Zerbino replied . . . We have.'"

The spine and skeleton of Rhodes's work are facts, but he means to suck the last ungodly bit of marrow from them. So he finally translates cannibalism into a metaphorical act, a kind of dark ritual. For the madman Keseberg, who learns to prefer human meat to beef, his consumption becomes a taking into himself of the souls of the dead, so that he becomes their collective memory and ambition, their chorus. And by them, through the symbol of their flesh, he believes himself become an army. He commits murder to subsume the dead, and finally procreates with a woman he has killed.

What is Rhodes's fanciful metaphor but a satanic caricature of the sacrament itself? Pat Dolan, of *The Ungodly*, a Catholic, reflects upon the rituals of his faith, upon the Mass and the Host. "The priest said it was bread but the priest said it was also the body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ . . . The Savior had ordered all true Christians to eat of His Body and drink of His Blood . . . It made his flesh crawl because it seemed to him suddenly that the Savior had asked them to do a terrible thing but maybe that was the point. To bind them to Him body and soul in a ritual beyond all human understanding."

The Andes survivors, all Catholics, also reflected upon the similarity between the Host and the flesh of their friends who had died in the crash, or later in an avalanche. For them the Creator's clear instruction lay in the fact of their creation. Survival was a kind of worship. But one must not make too much of this. Their deliberations, however agonized, were always practical. They fashioned bowls from skulls and eating instruments from bones not to mock death or worship their God. For them the distinction between creation and death had been purged, by a great event, of its mystery and terror.

Bradford Angier's *How to Stay Alive in the Woods* is a calm, sure handbook of survival techniques. "It has always been, among all social levels of all peoples, that famishing human beings left to their own resources will devour anything even suspected of having food value and eventually will resort to cannibalism."

This is not so. David Mountfield's *History of Polar Exploration* recounts the terrible death of Sir Robert Scott after his misbegotten trip to the South Pole. He died 11 miles from supplies, and when he was found it was with two dead friends beside him. All had starved; none were mutilated. Sir Douglas Mawson, exploring King George V Land in the Antarctic soon after, watched his party and supplies swallowed by a crevasse, all except one member of his team. When his friend died, Mawson, starving, did not eat the man. Rather he loaded his body on a sledge and towed it 100 miles, arriving at his base just in time to watch his ship sail over the horizon without him. He was at length rescued.

Piers Paul Read believes that had all 45 in the plane lived, all 45 would have died. Probably.

Who is the third who walks always beside you?
When I count, there are only you and I together
But when I look ahead up the white road
There is always another one walking beside you. . . .

T. S. Eliot, in a note to *The Waste Land*, explains that these lines "were stimulated by the account of one of the Antarctic expeditions (I forget which, but I think one of Shackleton's): it was related that the party of explorers, at the extremity of their strength, had the constant delusion that there was *one more member* than could actually be counted." Maybe Eliot truly couldn't recollect where he had read such a striking account, but it's not likely. I'd guess rather that he meant, properly, to suggest that the sense of some presence, savior or spectator is not unique to a single extreme situation, but symptomatic of most of them.

The Andes survivors dreamt to substance their parents and girlfriends, a common hallucination perhaps, not peculiar to circumstances of prolonged hardship. Maurice Bailey testifies that "for a long time I could not rid myself of the feeling that there were three people in the raft." In the best true sea story ever written, *Sailing Alone Around the World*, Joshua Slocum tells without adornment or much sense of mystery of having his "Spray" sailed by the ghost of Columbus off the Barbary Coast in the 1890s while her master lay below. Dougal Robertson writes of an odd experience: "During the night watch Lyn told me how she could sometimes see her sisters Edna and Mary . . . in the dinghy pulling us toward safety and she often talked with them in the long lonely hours of watchkeeping."

In many instances the third is no doubt the shepherding Lord. Whatever his visage, he is a manifestation of rescue. The hope of rescue, in which the man adrift, passive in his misery, is plucked home, seems common to all, wherever abandoned. It is a nourishing hope. Yet the Baileys watched seven ships pass tham by till they were rescued finally by a Korean fishing boat. The Robertsons shot off flares within easy view of a passing ship, and were ignored. The Andes survivors watched a biplane fly above them, dip its wings and disappear forever.

Dreams of rescue soon enough give way to dreams of food, or revenge, or a new life. But soon these too yield. Dougal Robertson believes that "the enormous difference between actively fighting for survival and passively awaiting rescue or death" is the most crucial of all differences, that it is the difference between life and death. If the former is chosen, the castaway "becomes master of his fate and will devise means to survive. . . ." The Andes survivors are alive because they gave up all hope of rescue, and commenced to condition the best among themselves for the walk out.

Another alternative, suicide, did not draw these people. (Here they are, after all, to tell their tales.) The Baileys discussed the possibility, and dismissed it. At least one member of the Donner Party let himself fall asleep forever in the snow. The Andes survivors were repelled by the prospect of self-slaughter on religious grounds, if no other.

The survivors, the fit, are possessed perhaps by that third man, whom they have themselves fabricated from what depths of need or fancy they alone can know. Surely the fierceness of their will changes them, or presses them to discover what they—perhaps what we—have always been. Maralyn Bailey says that "we had died and been reborn."

She, like others, came even to relish the fact, the certain knowledge, that they were alone, adrift, castaway, with only a third man of her devising to solace her and her mate.

There is no knowing what price the rescued must pay to live again among those who shall never see what they have seen. Perhaps such wounds as those caused by prolonged hunger and thirst, by constipation and boils and the noxious stink of people once and still loved, by sleeplessness, and then by journalists, can pass. But suppose deprivations persist past rescue? In the Andes there existed a miniature society, a mirror—or parody—of civilized social organizations. The arrangements and hierarchies necessary for survival and escape were ingenious and complex. Yet after a short while "no one played games, sang songs, or told anecdotes." Neither was there sexual need, perhaps because of a reluctance to offend God, perhaps because of the boys' physical debilitation.

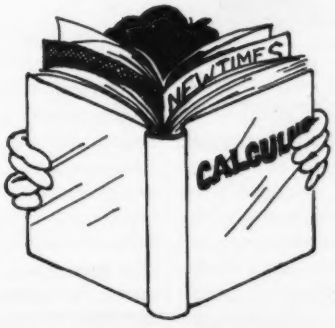
Now the boys, according to Read, are moody and self-indulgent, confused, often compulsive. They were pressganged into heroism, and we like to think we are not unlike them, that we would behave as bravely and as well as they did. Perhaps we would, too. But reflect before envying them what they know, what secrets they hold. After their rescue they were flown to the valley, and they lay on the grass and rolled on it. One of them noticed a daisy growing near his nose. "He picked it up, sniffed it, and then handed it to Carlitos, who lay beside him. Carlitos was about to smell it too, but instead he crammed it into his mouth and ate it."

MUSIC

Getting Gordy's goat: a filthy look from Smokey Robinson said it all

By Janet Maslin

The things Elaine Jesmer doesn't know about Motown could fill a book—and, as a matter of fact, they have. *Number One with a Bullet* is her *roman-à-G clef* about the music business, wherein a fictitious black record company full of fictitious stars is run by a fictitious megalomaniac bearing no mean resemblance to Motown's own Berry Gordy Jr. Sales figures on the book have yet to be compiled, but it has had at least two important readers thus far. Al Ruddy, the self-congratulatory producer of *The Godfather* (remember the 1973 Academy Awards, when Al was the hit of the evening?), read enough of Jesmer's book to purchase the film rights. And Louis Nizer, who is presumably in either Motown's or Gordy's employ, read enough to start haggling about libel with Farrar, Straus & Giroux, the book's publishers. But Jesmer isn't worried because "there's intent implied in libel and I had



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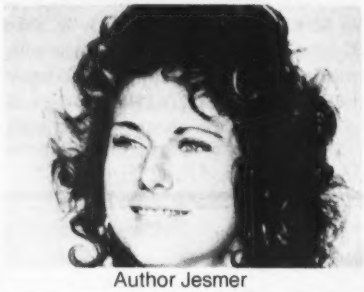
none of that. *Now* I intend like a motherfucker, because the cat has just gone crazy." The cat in question is Gordy, and this is what he's had to go crazy about:

Daniel Stone is a tall, lanky, boyish-looking black singer with "a precision instrument of a voice, as superior to that of an ordinary singer as a Rolls Royce is to a kiddie car." But Daniel is not free to use his God-given talents as he sees fit because he is hopelessly enslaved to Famous Records, the successful Houston label that spawned the "Famous Sound" and is run by the tyrannical, social-climbing Bob Vale. Stone's ties to the label are both personal and professional, since he is married to one of Vale's foul-tempered sisters (Marvin Gaye, a former friend of Jesmer's who fits Stone's description almost perfectly, is married to a sister of Gordy's). Sometimes Daniel thinks back to the good old days when he was hardly Famous at all, just a singer with a group called the Starlighters (Gaye sang with the Moonglows). But mostly he worries about the present, smokes bushels of marijuana and dreams of escaping his enemies. Vale knows of Stone's rebelliousness, and so he spitefully tries to suppress Stone's potential hit single, which is rather ponderously entitled "Evil." Maybe it's that title that makes Vale nervous, since he has just beaten a Famous girl singer to a bloody pulp, in one of his habitual sado-erotic frenzies. (Jesmer is skating on the thinnest possible ice here, what with the rumors that have always surrounded the untimely passing of Tammi Terrell. Rumor has never linked Gordy to the episode directly, but the lead singer of one of his top groups is supposed to have assaulted Terrell shortly before she died—and miraculously escaped any investigation or prosecution.)

Even before Louis Nizer called, Jesmer knew Motown wasn't going to be happy about all this; she remembers passing Smokey Robinson on the street one day and being greeted by a filthy look that said it all. And Gordy's strong reaction, she says, is predictable: "I've only met him onee, but I've heard that's the way he is." She has also heard that Gordy has someone taste his food for him, that a tendency toward fits of rage is congenital in the Gordy family and that Berry fathered the first child of Motown's most important female star. But if such things have been left out of the book, it's certainly not through any sense of discretion; this being a novel, no proof is required. "I may not know these things as facts, but I know them as a writer," Jesmer airily explains.

Besides, some of the other events she describes are far from implausible: mismanagement of artists' incomes, manipulation of their careers, phony songwriting credits used to divert royalties, widespread use of drugs and nasty power politics within a very closely knit "family." (The Justice Department found the business aspect of the book intriguing enough to want to interrogate the author.) What seems unrealistic is not so much the book's detailing of corruption, but rather its dialogue (blacks, Jews and Irishmen speak with identical inflections) and the characters themselves. No one in *Number One with a Bullet* sounds even remotely like a real person, unless you happen to have met Ms. Jesmer, in which case you notice one thing right off: they all sound just like her.

She is 35, lives in California and dresses young, showing off a lot of cleavage and the fluffiest hair a blond honky could ever hope for. Her conversation is sprinkled with words like "beautiful," "cat" and "mellow." She has worked as a



Author Jesmer

publicist, a secretary, and "kinda dealt in dope, but not really." She is clearly the model for the book's Kate Henley, the white publicist with whom Daniel Stone eventually falls in love, described in the novel as "the white man's fantasy of the girl next door." The instant rapport between Kate and Daniel is captured like so: "As crazy as it seemed, she sensed that she had met a man . . . in whom she recognized the same structure, the same chords, the same melodies that existed within her own mind. It was as though mentally and emotionally—indeed, in every other way than physically—Daniel Stone was the mirror image of her own personality."

"She tried to rationalize this odd conviction, which refused to be dismissed." Jesmer took four and a half years to write her book, during most of which she was in analysis; that may account for some of the peculiarities of her prose style. But her years as a publicist (she never worked directly for Motown, but did represent several Motown acts) account for even deeper peculiarities. She freely admits to affairs with a long list of her clients (a list that does not include Gaye by the way—"I told Marvin we shoulda done somethin', but it's too late now, because he told me his whole number on sex and it turned me right off") and acknowledges a certain frustration. Although the novel insists that Kate Henley's work is deeply fulfilling—Daniel Stone's talent is so staggering it inspires Kate to new heights of creativity in the writing of her press releases—a publicist's lot is not necessarily a happy or rewarding one. Jesmer has devoted too much of her own time and energy to furthering other people's careers, and it shows. Despite what she may say, this novel is less her attempt to "tell it like I saw it" than it is her long-awaited revenge.

The bitterness is most evident when she talks about Marvin Gaye, whom she considers an abject sellout to the Motown moguls. "The fact that Marvin would even sing with Diana Ross, when he's got perfect pitch and she couldn't stay on a note if her life depended on it—Marvin *hates* the way Diana sings, I know it! But he's doing it for the money, he's doing everything for the money now. He once had a lot of vitality, but he's accepted injustice for a price. Okay, it's great, I'm glad he discovered sex. But I sure don't see where he topped his past stuff with 'Let's Get It On.'"

If there's anyone Jesmer feels more wounded by than Gaye it is probably Al Ruddy, of whom she disapproves both personally ("He may have been a normal guy once, but now he's had hair transplants and looks like Plastic Man") and professionally: Ruddy turned her book over to a black screenwriter, whom Jesmer feels botched the job completely. "It's now the story of white mobsters taking over a black record company, and the only words I recognized were 'board,' 'amp' and 'mix,'" she complains. (The screenwriter had never been to a recording session, and had to rely solely on the novel for atmosphere.) But Jesmer is perversely lucky to have been what she thinks of as mistreated once again, inasmuch as her imagination is fueled by anger. *Number One with a Bullet* may never make it to the screen (Gordy is trying to suppress it, she's sure), but she doesn't seem to care, since her next book is well underway. She can barely contain her glee as she announces her new subject: she'll be telling it like she sees it about the movie business this time.

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A bit of history closes shop

FINAL TRIBUTE

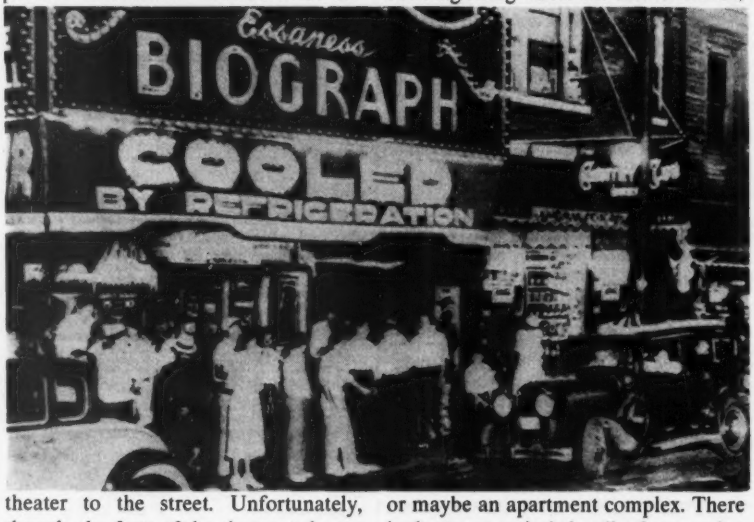
By Cary Schneider

Look what they're doing now! First they destroyed our great old ballparks—Ebbets Field in Brooklyn, Sportsman Park in St. Louis, Crosley Field in Cincinnati. Then they started doing away with the movie studios—MGM and Paramount have bitten the dust most recently. Now the cannibals who feel compelled to reduce history to rubble are taking aim at yet another great popular landmark. The Biograph Theater in Chicago has locked its doors for good.

For those of us who prefer sweat-stained landmarks to those of cold steel and stone, the Biograph's demise is nothing short of tragic. We cherish the fable of that sultry summer night of July 22, 1934, when a smiling John Dillinger strolled out of the tiny theater after seeing William Powell send Clark Gable to the electric chair in *Manhattan Melodrama*. "Boy, wasn't that a great show," Dillinger is said to have remarked to Anna Sage, one of two woman he was escorting—the one in the red dress who had blown the whistle on him. Then, according to legend, the head G-man lit a cigar, the women ducked for cover and a fusillade of government bullets sent Dillinger crashing to the pavement, his straw skimmer and .38 automatic at his side. Minutes later, the curious descended upon the body of the ex-Public Enemy Number One like so many crones, clawing at each other in the struggle to dip their hems and handkerchiefs in the blood flowing beneath the Biograph's twinkling marquee.

All right, so the joint never ranked with Grauman's Chinese Theater in glamour, nor with Ford's Theater in Bruce J. Catton's brand of significance. But the site mattered in a special way, as a people's landmark. The Biograph was a place where you could relive the Dillinger saga without stumbling on a bronze plaque, leaning over velvet ropes or listening to witless guides. It provided the setting—perfect down to the smallest detail—and all you had to add was the imagination. Over the years the Biograph never changed a whit and, sitting there in a hard-backed seat just like the one Dillinger sat in, smelling the same musty odor of decades-old popcorn, only the truly callous could go unmoved. Indeed, even discovering a slab of ancient chewing gum on the bottom of your seat could be exciting at the Biograph; you could never be absolutely certain that it hadn't once been chomped by *that* mouth.

When *Manhattan Melodrama* concluded that night—with the memorable message "Crime does not pay" floating across the screen—Dillinger's personal melodrama moved outside the theater to the street. Unfortunately, though, the facts of the shootout do not quite live up to the legend they spawned. Anna Sage was not wearing her infamous red dress, but a white blouse and orange skirt. Melvin Purvis, the FBI agent who had tracked Dillinger across the Midwest for months, was too nervous to light a cigar and his hands trembled at his sides. The agent's call to halt was too meek to be heard by Dillinger, who, catching the agents' movements, dashed down the sidewalk away from the theater. His automatic was caught in his right pants pocket and he was struck down by four bullets while futilely trying to release the safety. He lurched forward past a tavern and tumbled to the ground, landing face down next to the Mee Woh Lo Chinese Restaurant, nearly half a block from the theater.



The Biograph has managed to stay in business for 40 more years largely on the strength of the Dillinger legend. Up until a few weeks ago, the management lured patrons to the place—which had been reduced to running second-run double features—by passing out cards advertising the shootout. For the Biograph, at least, crime did pay.

But in the end it was done in by what the Neanderthals among us like to call progress. There is talk of an office building rising where the theater stands, or maybe an apartment complex. There is also more optimistic talk of renovating the Biograph and reopening it as a smart new emporium. How about the Biograph 1 and 2?

Uh uh. No good. The place was no more meant to be chic than the London Bridge was meant to be deposited in the middle of some desert. No sir, after the wreckers and the builders and the renovators have gotten their mitts on the old place, the only real evidence that will remain of that memorable summer night are a lot of yellowed newspaper clippings and some 40-year-old blood-stained handkerchiefs. History deserves better. ●

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The Song of The Sergeant Major.

It was a ballad they sang at the Rangoon Racquet Club (G.O.), about arms and men and the drink born there in the sunset of the Empire.

The Rangoon Racquet Club (G.O.), that makeshift institution, seems to have traveled about with its membership from Burma to the Northern Frontier during the troubles of the '80's.

As every British schoolboy used to know, it was one of the Club's members, Sir John Tripp Chaput, who in the heat of battle said: "Give me one Sergeant Major and I shall win the war."

However, an army's drinking songs often bear better witness than the historians. In attempting to compile our own *Collected Ballads of the Rangoon Racquet Club*, we were not surprised to run across one fragment that has the actual quotation in it. During the engagement referred to, Chaput and his cohorts were young Officers of the Line. Fighting under the glowering crags of Afghanistan, they had their work cut out for them—just to stay alive. The experienced and determined enemy had quickly thinned the ranks of The Queen's troops; and the new replacements sent up were hardly her best. As the song goes:

They sent us babes from mothers' arms
For men there were no more.
The Afghans cheered to see 'em come
And Captain Chaput swore:
"If I had a Sergeant Major
I'd win this bloody war!"
The Afghans raised their carving knives
And loosed their battle-roar...

This fragment led us to want to know more. We turned up the story (which may be apocryphal) of a much-decorated Sergeant Major who "could curse in all the twenty tongues of India including English." He was thus capable of teaching some discipline to the ragtag soldiery, Native and British.

This was the same Sergeant Major who invented the drink that today bears his name. And he vowed he would share the formula with no man. (The one time he shared it—with a woman—is another story.)

So it was that Chaput and his brother officers arranged to detain this irreplaceable walking recipe back at the Club, out of harm's way.

That decision, foolish as it sounds, may have won the war. In the actual battle, Chaput regretted it and remarked, "If I had a Sergeant Major..." etc.

A private, crouching behind a rock nearby, heard and misunderstood, thinking his Captain wanted a drink. He scrambled to his feet and dashed off in a hail of rifle-fire, returning in minutes to hand over a brimful canteen.

The enemy, mistaking this stupid act for heroism, slackened their fire and wavered. Chaput seized the moment and called out, "Sound the charge!" His Company leapt to the attack. The entire Regiment took heart. As it was sung thereafter at the Club:

The foam was on the Afghan beards,
The blood was in their eye
But we tucked 'em in quite peacefully
Before the moon was high.
So we'll hoist a Sergeant Major
And if any man ask why,
Let him ask five hundred Afghans
At the roll call in the sky!

We'll be pleased to share the Sergeant Major, the drink, with you. (The recipe we prefer to keep to ourselves.) It's tart, crisp, and lively as rifle-fire. And simply wizard when you're swapping old war stories with your friends.

The Sergeant Major from Heublein

Collectors: Miniature replicas of the Sergeant Major are available from Valiant Miniatures, P.O. Box 394, Skokie, Ill. 60076

Heublein Sergeant Major, 48 Proof. Made with London Dry Gin and Natural flavors. © 1974 Heublein, Inc., Hartford, Conn. 06101